

# THE NATION

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Chairman: J. M. KEYNES.

Editor: H. D. HENDERSON.

Telephone: Business Manager: Museum 5551.

Editorial: Museum 5552.

Telegrams: "Nationetta, Holb. London."

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### EVENTS OF THE WEEK

ON Sunday, April 29th, the British High Commissioner in Egypt presented an ultimatum to the Egyptian Government, requiring a categorical assurance that the new Public Assemblies Bill should not become law, and threatening to take appropriate action unless such assurance was received within three days. It was reported that, at the same time, warships were ordered to Alexandria, and a subsequent statement by Sir Austen Chamberlain showed that the rumour was well founded. The action contemplated was, presumably, a seizure of the Egyptian Customs. The Egyptian Cabinet then called a secret session of both Houses, as a result of

which the Bill was withdrawn for this Session. At the moment of writing, the Egyptian Government's reply to the ultimatum has not been published, but apparently no guarantee is given against reintroduction of the Bill, and it remains to be seen whether the British Government will accept its withdrawal as a compliance with the terms of the ultimatum. Meanwhile a White Paper has been promised, containing the text of the ultimatum and the previous British Note, the text of the Assemblies Bill itself, and the text of the two previous Acts for which it was to be substituted.

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The British Government's case for this drastic veto on a piece of domestic legislation is that the Bill, if passed, would so weaken the safeguards against public disturbances as to endanger foreign lives and property, for the safety of which Great Britain remains responsible under the reserved points. In view of the meagre character, and doubtful authenticity of the summaries hitherto published in the Press, we prefer to await the full text of the Bill before making any comment on the measure itself. The ultimatum is, in any event, a questionable step. If the British Government were really apprehensive that the safety of foreigners would be endangered, they were clearly entitled, under the Declaration of 1922, to protest against the Bill, and to warn the Egyptian Government that they would be held responsible for any untoward consequences; but that is a very different matter from a threat of forcible intervention to prevent the passing of a measure which, in form at least, is concerned purely with domestic affairs. The whole incident should bring home to the people of both countries the extremely unsatisfactory position in which Anglo-Egyptian relations have been left by the Egyptian rejection of the draft Treaty. Until those relations have been clearly defined, in a treaty acceptable to both parties, the Egyptian Cabinet will not listen readily to suggestions or protests from London; the British Government will always be tempted to continue the method of control by ultimatum.

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It was the Egyptians who rejected the Treaty, and the next move, nominally, lies with them. The British Government, however, could go a long way towards enabling them to make that move. The real point on which the negotiations broke down was the position of the Canal garrison. There is no serious technical objection to the removal of the troops to the Canal Zone within a reasonable space of time, and so long as they are retained in Cairo and Alexandria, the Egyptians will regard them as an army of occupation—not of Canal defence. This feeling is not only an impediment to the conclusion of the Treaty, it stiffens the opposition of Egyptians to every proposal or request emanating from London, because they consider that they are

negotiating under duress. Sooner or later the question must be faced, for there is no permanent middle course between the establishment of Anglo-Egyptian relations on a basis of friendly agreement, and a thorough-going reoccupation of the country. The latter course might suit Sir William Joynson-Hicks, who chooses this moment for the illiberal sneer that "Egypt has always been a country which has been ruled since the time of the Pharaohs by some other nation"; but we do not believe that that is the spirit of the Government as a whole, and we hope they will have sufficient courage to reconsider their attitude on the one point that stands in the way of an all-round settlement.

Mr. Churchill has moved slightly in the direction recommended by the Liberal Industrial Inquiry in his proposed changes in the form of the Budget. But there is one important reform which he has so far ignored—namely, the provision of an estimate as to how far the revenue collected within the year exceeded or fell short of the revenue acquired within that year. In answer to a question in the House on Tuesday, he admitted that the arrears of super-tax carried forward were £5,000,000 less than the arrears brought in—so here, on the top of all the other wangles is another very substantial one. Without this contribution from previous years' revenue, extracted under special pressure by Somerset House, last year's results would have shown, once more, a deficit. We suggest that some Liberal Member should invite him to give corresponding figures for the income tax, and also the amount of the balances of the Revenue Departments not paid over into the Exchequer—which otherwise we shall not know until the Finance Accounts appear six months hence.

The duty on kerosene proposed last week by Mr. Churchill as an essential part of the effective taxation of petrol has been abandoned with the utmost promptitude, and a big hole has thus already developed in Mr. Churchill's Budget. Apparently the Government had not realized the extent to which paraffin is now used in country cottages, not merely for lighting, but for cooking. The moment that it was discovered that the duty would tax large numbers of agricultural labourers to the tune of about 1s. a week, the duty became politically impossible. Mr. Churchill is to be congratulated on the promptitude with which he accepted the inevitable, and on the admirable skill and temper with which he announced the abandonment of the duty to the House of Commons. So far as Parliament is concerned, he extracted the Government, with the minimum of humiliation, from a humiliating situation by thoroughly easy and good-humoured repartee at exactly the right moment. So far as the electorate is concerned, the withdrawal has been so prompt that the damage will probably not be very serious.

It remains to be seen to what extent the abandonment of the kerosene duty will affect the yield and the workability of the tax on petrol. The average private motorist will certainly be ill-advised to economize by using kerosene; but it is possible that kerosene mixtures may be used to a considerable extent by commercial vehicles. Apart from this possibility of substitution, the customs officials, as Colonel Moore-Brabazon pointed out, will not find it an easy task to administer the new "chemical frontier." These, of course, have been the main objections in the past to adopting the proposal urged persistently by the A.A., with such a boomerang result, of putting the taxation of motor vehicles for the Road Fund on a petrol-power instead of a horse-power tax basis. In practice, we do not

expect that the leakage of revenue from evasion or substitution will be considerable at first, but Mr. Churchill's estimates of the yield for future years may be more seriously affected.

Only Mr. C. F. G. Masterman could have done full justice to the scene in the House of Commons on Wednesday night. Mr. Churchill being laid up with an attack of influenza, Mr. A. M. Samuel, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, was temporarily in charge of the Budget, and proceeded, with the skilled assistance of Mr. Snowden, Mr. Runciman, and Sir John Simon, to tie himself up into knots. The proposed duty on mechanical lighters being under discussion, an ingenious Tory member sought to give it a protectionist flavour by suggesting that the Excise duty should be half the Customs duty. This Mr. Samuel at first said he could not accept as it would infringe certain treaty obligations, but under pressure, and prompted apparently by Mr. Amery, he shortly afterwards changed his mind and said that he would accept the amendment. The Opposition immediately scented in this a violation of the Prime Minister's pledge, and a Conservative member, Mr. Fielden, displayed uneasiness on this account. Mr. Samuel was then badgered as to whether he had the Chancellor's authority for the concession, which he evidently had not. By this time, however, he was too flustered to extricate himself, and was only saved by the timely arrival of the Chief Whip and Mr. Boothby, the Chancellor's Parliamentary Private Secretary. The whole matter was then postponed until Mr. Churchill's return to the House.

The most interesting indication given by the result of the French general election is that of the strength of the Home Rule movement in Alsace-Lorraine, where Home Rule was the real issue, which cut across the party divisions. The Socialist Party, which is almost the only one in Alsace-Lorraine free from any Home Rule taint, combined at the second ballot with anti-Home Rulers of all shades, and the Socialists owe their two seats, at Strasbourg and Mulhouse respectively, to Conservative and even clerical votes, the candidates of the "National Union" having withdrawn in their favour. In other constituencies the Socialists withdrew in favour of "National Unionists." On the other hand, the Communists combined with Catholic Home Rulers, to whose votes they owe their two seats in the Lorraine department of Moselle and their victory at Strasbourg in a straight fight with the retiring ultra-patriotic Socialist deputy, M. Georges Weill. The most striking results were the election at Altkirch and Colmar respectively by overwhelming majorities of Dr. Rickling and M. Rossé, who were in prison awaiting their trial on a charge of treason, which began at Colmar on Tuesday. Two other avowed Home Rulers were elected, and the majority of the deputies for Alsace-Lorraine, as before, are partisans of at least "administrative autonomy." The French Press has now made the belated discovery that a demand for Home Rule, although mistaken, is compatible with loyalty to France. If the French Government were wise, it would abandon its repressive measures and withdraw the charges of treason against the Home Rule leaders, whose conviction can but strengthen their cause.

In France generally the election shows a distinct move to the Right. The vagueness of French party allegiance—many deputies decide only after their election to what group they will belong—has led to varying estimates of the respective strength of the various parties, but it is clear that the Right, officially known



as the "Democratic Republican Union," which is represented by M. Marian in the Cabinet, has gained at least forty seats, and is now the largest party in the Chamber, and that the Right and Centre together have now at least 330 deputies in a Chamber of 612, whereas in 1924 they had 265 in a Chamber of 584. The Socialists held their own, and the losers were the Radicals and the Communists, who were the victims of their own tactics at the second ballots. Thanks to those tactics the Communists won only three seats in the "Red Belt" of the Parisian working-class suburbs, although in the whole of the eighteen suburban constituencies of the Seine, where there were second ballots last Sunday, they had nearly 40 per cent. of the total poll. The sweeping Conservative victory in Paris was due to the confusion on the Left, although the Conservative vote increased, especially in certain working-class constituencies.

M. Poincaré has thus been "plebiscite," but it is not certain that the composition of the new Chamber quite suits him. He is credited with the intention of resigning to reconstruct his Cabinet, but in what sense? A Government of "Republican Concentration," without the Right, seems impossible. Such a coalition of the Centre and the non-Socialist Left would have a very small majority, dependent on the consistent support of all the Radicals and "Republican Socialists," which could not be relied on. The logical consequence of the election would be a Government of the Centre and the Right, which is demanded by the Conservative Press, and would have a stable majority of about fifty. If the French Radicals had any political sense, they would go into Opposition and force M. Poincaré to form such a Government, but they are unlikely to take that course, and M. Poincaré is most unwilling to lose them, for they provide him with a convenient screen. He will probably try to keep both the Radicals and the Right, and for a time succeed, but the Right, who are now more than a fourth of the Chamber, will hardly be permanently content with a single portfolio or agree to leave all the principal Departments, except that of Finance, in the hands of Ministers of the Left. In any case, France has returned to the "Bloc National," which, it should not be forgotten, included the majority of the Radicals. The German Press of the Left anticipates no change in foreign policy, and in this they may be justified, for French foreign policy is fundamentally always the same, and M. Briand's attempt to change it failed eighteen months ago. The French opposition to Mr. Kellogg's proposal and the French counter-proposal show that. It is likely, however, that there will be a change in the Foreign Minister, for M. Briand's health may make it impossible for him to remain.

The activities of Senator Borah, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States Senate, deserve careful attention. The American Navy Bill is still before the Senate, and Senator Borah is preparing to oppose it on the broadest issues of policy. He believes that the United States and Great Britain can still repair the failure at Geneva, and he opposes the construction of the fifteen 10,000-ton cruisers as an obstacle to steps for the limitation of naval armaments. It is believed that he will also take advantage of the Bill to raise the question of an international conference on maritime law, in the conviction that the American proposals for renunciation of war have created an atmosphere favourable to discussion of the question. Meanwhile, he has intimated that he would support a movement for further discussion of the correspondence on American adherence to the Protocol of the Inter-

national Court. Whatever may be the immediate fate of Senator Borah's campaign, it is likely to have far-reaching consequences. The problem of naval disarmament, the problem of belligerent rights at sea, the problem of security by peace pacts, and the problem of America's attitude to the League and the International Court are all intimately connected, and anything which brings their connection into prominence is a step towards their solution.

Labour relations in the wool textile industry have again become unsettled, and the wages situation is giving rise to anxiety. Last November the Industrial Council for the woollen industry terminated the wages agreement at the instance of the employers' representatives, and since then the industry has been conducted without a wages agreement. The employers have stated that they will not sign a general agreement on the present wage basis, and the trade unions have refused to discuss a reduction in wage standards. The worsted spinners are reported to be considering the possibility of reducing the wages of juveniles in the worsted spinning section of the industry, and the trade unions fear that this may be the prelude to an attempt by the employers to secure sectional reductions of wages throughout the industry, leading gradually to a general reduction in wage rates.

In the dyeing and finishing section the situation is even more strained, owing to the difficulty which the trade unions have experienced in their attempt to introduce compulsory collective piece-work throughout the industry. The smaller firms are said to oppose the introduction of the collective piece-work system, and the general employers' organization, the Allied Association of Dyers, Bleachers, Finishers, and Printers, informed the trade unions that it could not compel individual members to establish collective piece-work. The trade unions thereupon had recourse to the employers' sectional organizations, but the employers' associations also replied that they could not interfere with the enforcement of piece-work, and added that they were not prepared to enter into any discussions which did not include juvenile wages and the payment of adolescents. The dissatisfaction of the workers is aggravated by the knowledge that a reduction in wages is due owing to the fall in the cost of living, and a large body of trade union opinion is said to favour the handing in of notices unless the employers offer better conditions.

The revised Prayer Book Measure received last week the approval of the Church Assembly, but by a majority considerably smaller than that obtained for the original Measure last July. The voting was by Houses, and the Bishops were divided much as before, 32 voting for the Measure and 2 against, while in July 34 voted for and 4 against. There was a marked change, however, in the number of affirmative votes in the other two Houses. The Clergy mustered on this occasion 183 for and 59 against the Measure. In July there voted 253 for and 37 against. The Laity produced 181 supporters last week, as against 230 in July, while the lay vote in the negative remained constant at 92. The general tendency which these figures illustrate is that the concessions in the revised Book have alienated a considerable section of Anglo-Catholic opinion without placating a corresponding proportion of the stalwart Protestants. The prospects of the Measure in the House of Commons do not therefore look very bright, but members should not light-heartedly vote it down without considering the troublesome situation which would result.

## THE RENUNCIATION OF WAR

THE British Government has before it a decision on foreign policy of the very first importance. It has to reply to the proposal of the United States that the six principal Powers should forthwith enter into a formal Pact whereby they would "renounce war as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another." The German Government has already replied declaring its readiness to subscribe to such a Pact. The French Government, whose dislike of the project was made clear in the preceding correspondence between M. Briand and Mr. Kellogg, has submitted an alternative draft of so singular a nature that it has been described not unfairly as being more like a justification than a renunciation of war. There remain Italy, Japan, and ourselves. Much clearly depends on the nature of our reply. It will probably have a decisive bearing both on the immediate question of whether Mr. Kellogg's proposal will lead to anything or not, and on the larger question of whether America will be willing to associate herself more closely with Europe in the work of peace. It must also have, for better or for worse, a far-reaching influence on Anglo-American relations.

We have no doubts as to what our reply should be. We should express our readiness to accept the Pact precisely as it stands. There is no need for reservations or qualifications of any sort. It is an entire mistake to suppose that either our Covenant or our Locarno obligations are inconsistent with a simple adherence to Mr. Kellogg's formula. The warlike commitments which we have incurred either expressly under Locarno or implicitly under the Covenant can only arise when some other State resorts to war. Either that State will be a party to the proposed Pact, or it will not. In the latter case, the Pact does not apply. In the former case, the aggressor State will have broken the Pact as well as Locarno or the Covenant, so that, as Mr. Kellogg himself explains, "the other parties to the anti-war treaty would thus as a matter of law be automatically released from their obligations thereunder and free to fulfil their Locarno commitments." It may be desirable to accompany our acceptance of the Pact by a declaration that we do not regard it as in any way diminishing our existing obligations. But it is quite unnecessary to incorporate reservations to that effect in the Pact itself. And if this is unnecessary, it would be the height of unwisdom to attempt to do so.

Unfortunately, we are not very hopeful that an attitude of simple acceptance will commend itself to Sir Austen Chamberlain or the Cabinet. It seems more likely that the British reply will be profuse in verbal appreciation of the American proposal, which will doubtless be hailed as of epoch-making importance; but that it will proceed to argue that Mr. Kellogg's simple formula is too vague to be acceptable, and to suggest the desirability of various reservations and definitions. We shall not, of course, go as far in this direction as the French. What seems most likely is that we shall take up a position midway between the French and American standpoints. This at any rate almost certainly represents the initial bias which Sir Austen Chamberlain will bring to the consideration of his reply. He will not want to accept the American proposal unreservedly, because he will be reluctant to separate himself from France. He will prefer a middle position, if a defensible one can be found, for the sake of its being a middle position. He will conceive, Britain's rôle as that of mediator between the French and the Americans, sympathizing with both, understanding both better than either can understand the other, trying to reconcile their points of view.

This will be Sir Austen's bias; and it would be unreasonable to complain that it should be so. In a sense it is quite true that Britain is a natural mediator between the French and the American attitudes. None the less, to associate ourselves with objections to the American proposal on the strength of this general conception would be to misapply it altogether and to commit a grave error of policy. This is not the occasion for a nicely calculated middle course.

British opinion has not as yet appreciated the real importance of the American proposal, or the hopeful, far-reaching possibilities which it opens out. That we should be slow to discern its promise is very natural. As a member of the League of Nations, we have been absorbed for years past in the discussion of many controversial projects for ensuring peace—Treaties of Mutual Assistance, Protocols, Optional Clauses, model Treaties of Arbitration, Locarno itself. Whatever our opinions on such matters, we have all come to recognize that the problem is laborious, complicated, highly technical; and we feel instinctively towards the American proposal something of the professional's impatience with the specious short-cuts of the amateur. Resolutions renouncing war! We have got long past that stage; we are at grips with the substantial questions of how disputes are to be settled when they arise, by what procedure of arbitration or conciliation, how far it is necessary or practicable or wise to deter possible aggressors by sanctions organized in advance, how the "aggressor" is to be defined, how armaments can be curtailed. The American proposal makes no contribution on any of these questions. It says nothing as to how disputes are to be settled, or as to what is to be the test of aggression. It contains no offer to participate in sanctions. It is just a vague, pious resolution to renounce war, very like the pious resolution adopted at the last Assembly prohibiting "aggressive war." No one took that resolution very seriously. Why should we take the American proposal any more seriously? It may be quite unobjectionable to us; but if it is objectionable to the French, and if it is make-believe anyway, would it not be almost indecent to curry favour with America by replying in terms which would appear to carry a rebuke to France? There are many people, among them good internationalists, who react to the American proposal in some such way as this, though not, of course, in this consecutively reasoned way, for the point is that they have not yet taken the proposal seriously enough to bring their minds to bear actively upon it.

Such a view cannot survive a few moments' serious reflection. Even if the content of the proposed Pact were no more substantial than that of last year's Polish resolution, it would still be a new development of the utmost importance that America is willing to be a party to this Pact. This is important from several points of view. First of all, there is the standpoint of our own relations with America and the possibility of disputes between us. It is curious how apt we are to overlook this aspect of the matter in our preoccupation with the European problem. But really we ought not to treat lightly the opportunity of securing a formal engagement with America that neither Power will make war upon the other. America is likely to continue to grow faster than ourselves in wealth, in numbers, and in strength; what her temper will be ten years, twenty years, fifty years hence, no one can foresee; there are likely to be many subjects of disagreement between us in the future as in the past. Apart from the possibility of actual warfare, there is the possibility of the use of the threat of war to enforce the views of the stronger party in any matter in dispute. An opportunity of



placing Anglo-American relations on a basis which excludes, not only war, but the threat of it, is an opportunity to be valued and seized. If we throw it heedlessly away, we or our descendants may rue the day.

Secondly, American participation in such a Pact would alter the whole perspective of the vexed problem of European security. It is true that America does not propose that the signatories to the Pact should bind themselves to punish any State which violates it. But the possibility that she might, in fact, join in such punitive action in a clear case of violation would be considerable. And this possibility might well be a more effective deterrent to a State contemplating war than the formal obligations of the Covenant or the rigid sanctions of a Protocol. At the very least, the danger that the United States might thwart the application of League sanctions, which is at present a real danger and difficulty, would be greatly reduced. She could not assume an attitude of complete neutrality, and of self-regarding insistence on full neutral rights, in a conflict arising from a violation of a Pact to which she was a party—unless, indeed, she differed from the League as to who had violated it, or considered one side as much to blame as the other.

That possibility points, of course, to a real problem—the familiar problem of deciding who has started a war. Supporters of the League believe that this question can only be satisfactorily determined in association with authoritative procedure for the settlement of disputes. This view is so strongly rooted in experience and reason that America may be expected to see the force of it; and this brings us to our third point. The conclusion of the proposed Pact would tend almost certainly to bring America into closer association with the League. She herself enters into Conciliation and Arbitration Treaties. The Covenant in its main aspect is a large Conciliation and Arbitration Treaty between the different members of the League. It will therefore be perfectly consistent for America, while remaining outside the League herself, to recognize the validity of League decisions as between one League member and another. Such developments would be of the utmost value; they represent the natural sequel to the conclusion of the Pact. But they can only come as the sequel; to seek to incorporate them in the project would be to wreck it.

There remains an even more important reason why we should welcome the American proposal wholeheartedly, and work for its general acceptance. There have always been two schools of League opinion; two conflicting conceptions of its purpose. According to one conception, its primary purpose is to maintain peace; peace is the end and all the rest is means; it should seek to uphold existing treaties if that is the best way to preserve peace, but if peace should require revision of treaties, it should seek to revise them. According to the other conception, the maintenance of existing treaties is the main object and peace is secondary. If some treaty right is threatened, or infringed, warlike action may and should be taken, though that warlike action should be termed not war but sanctions, and the treaty infringement should be deemed the act of aggression. The second conception is the one which, unfortunately, predominates in France; and the French counter-proposal represents merely an exceptionally blunt expression of it. It has never been the British conception; and it would be the height of folly to associate ourselves with it now. The American proposal, on the other hand, is essentially a reinforcement of the British international conception, and might serve to give a new impulse, along more hopeful lines, to the whole work of peace.

## THE WAR DEBTS\*

By J. M. KEYNES.

FOR the moment there is a lull in the acrid discussion which now for nine years has been waged round this question. But it has not been put to rest for long, and the time for its revival will undoubtedly come when the Dawes Scheme is up for revision—as sooner or later, and sooner better than later, it must be. It is opportune, therefore, to take stock of the situation as the negotiations of several years have left it.

Let us remember the origin of these debts. Soon after the beginning of the war it was clear that certain of our Allies—Russia and Belgium in the first instance, but subsequently all of them—would require financial assistance. We might have given this in loans or in subsidies. Loans were preferred to subsidies, in order to preserve a greater sense of responsibility and economy in the spending of them. But though financial assistance took the form of loans, it is scarcely to be supposed that the lending countries regarded them at the time as being in the nature of ordinary investments. Indeed it would have been very illogical to do so. For we often gave assistance in the form of money, precisely because we were less able to assist with men or ships. For example, when we sent guns to Italy to help her, after her first serious reverse, she had to pay for them by loans. But when matters got worse still, and we sent not only guns but gunners too to man them and to be killed, then we charged nothing. Yet in the former case Italy's contribution was the greater and in the latter ours. In particular, America's contribution for some time after she came into the war was mainly financial, because she was not yet ready to help in any other way. So long as America was sending materials and munitions to be used by Allied soldiers, she charged us for them, and these charges are the origin of what we now owe her. But when later on she sent men too, to use the munitions themselves, then we were charged nothing. Evidently there is not much logic in a system which causes us to owe money to America, not because she was able to help us so much, but because at first she was able to help us, so far at least as man power was concerned, so little.

This does not mean that the financial help which America gave us was not of the most extraordinary value to us. By the time that America came into the war our own resources as a lender were literally at an end. We were still at that time just about able to finance ourselves, but we had reached a point when we could no longer finance our Allies as well. America's financial assistance was therefore quite invaluable. From the moment she entered the war she undertook to lend whatever was required for the expenditure of ourselves and our Allies in the United States, including some contribution to support the Foreign Exchanges. But she was not prepared to make loans for use outside America. Great Britain had therefore to go on making loans to her Allies for such expenditure—with the result that we had to lend our Allies after America came into the war an amount almost equal to what we ourselves borrowed. More precisely, we borrowed from the United States, after she came into the war, £850,000,000, and lent to our Allies during the same period £750,000,000; so that in effect it was true—what the Americans have always been concerned to deny—that the loans she made to us were for the purpose of financing our Allies rather than for ourselves.

The result was that by the end of the war we were owed by our Allies about £1,600,000,000, whilst we, in our turn, owed to the United States £850,000,000.

\* The material for this article was prepared in connection with a Broadcast "Talk" given on May 3rd.

Since the war, the question has been constantly debated whether these sums ought to be treated as investments, just like any other business transaction, or whether regard should be paid to their origin and to the circumstances in which they were made. It has been the British view that they were not made as business transactions and should not be treated as such. It has been the American view, on the other hand, that they should be taken at their face value, that is to say, as bonds due and payable, tempered only by considerations as to the capacity of the debtor to pay, and, in practice, by a willingness on the part of the United States to accept a low rate of interest.

During the Peace Conference the British Government urged that the Allied War Debts should be entirely cancelled. Mr. Lloyd George raised the matter again with President Wilson in August, 1920. Finally, in August, 1922, in the famous Note written by Lord Balfour, the considered British view, from which we have never gone back, was set forth. In this Note the British Government declared their willingness to cancel the whole of what their Allies owed them, and also to forgo their own claims on Germany in favour of the other Allies, if the United States in turn would relieve them of their debt. By such an arrangement Great Britain would have been giving up on paper more than twice what she gained. The offer still holds good.

This policy was not accepted by the United States, and a separate settlement has been made between each pair of countries in turn. The settlement made with Great Britain is equivalent to charging a rate of interest of 3.3 per cent. on the whole amount due. The American settlement with France is equivalent to repayment at 1.6 per cent. interest, and that with Italy to repayment at 0.4 per cent. interest. Thus, the American settlement with Great Britain is twice as onerous as that with France and eight times as onerous as that with Italy. Great Britain, in her turn, has made arrangements with France and Italy, and has in both cases let them off lighter even than has the United States—the British settlement with France being 10 per cent. easier and that with Italy 33 per cent. easier than the corresponding American settlements. Thus, whilst the other Allies have been largely relieved, this country is left with the task of repaying her whole burden, subject only to the mitigation that the rate of interest charged, namely, 3.3 per cent., is moderate.

The effect of this settlement is that Great Britain will have to pay to the United States a sum of about £33,000,000 annually up to 1933, rising to nearly £38,000,000 annually thereafter from that year until 1984, when the debt will have been discharged. The reality of the weight of this burden may be illustrated by certain calculations which I made in the summer of 1923 when the details of Mr. Baldwin's settlement with Washington were first made public. We shall be paying to the United States each year for sixty years a sum equivalent to two-thirds of the cost of our Navy, a sum nearly equal to our State expenditure on Education, a sum which exceeds the total burden of our pre-war debt. Looked at from another standpoint, it represents more than the total normal profits of our coal mines and our mercantile marine added together. With these sums we could endow and splendidly house *every month* for sixty years one new university, one new hospital, one new institute of research, &c., &c. With an equal sacrifice over an equal period we could abolish slums and re-house in comfort the half of our population which is now inadequately sheltered.

On the other hand, we are now receiving from our Allies and from Germany an important contribution as an

offset to what we ourselves pay to the United States. It will be interesting to establish a rough balance-sheet.

In 1928 we shall receive from our Allies £12,800,000 and pay the United States £33,200,000; and by 1933 these figures will have risen to £17,700,000 and £37,800,000. Thus apart from our share of German Reparations, we shall be paying annually in respect of War Debts about £20,000,000 more than we receive. Now if the Dawes Annuities are paid by Germany in full, we shall come out just about "all-square." For the normal Dawes Annuity when it has reached its full figure (less the service of German loans, &c.) will amount to £117,000,000, of which our share (excluding the receipts of other parts of the Empire) will be about £22,000,000. Mr. Churchill has estimated that in the current financial year, 1928-29, our payments out will be £32,845,000, and our total receipts nearly £32,000,000.

It is not probable that these receipts will be realized in full. But it will enable us to summarize the situation, if we assume for the moment that they are so realized. In this case, each Ally would be able to pay the United States out of their receipts from Germany. When the Allied Debt payments to the United States have reached their maximum amount under the existing settlements, they will total £83,000,000 per annum (the *average* amount payable annually over the whole period works out at a total of £61,000,000). If we add to this the direct American share in German Reparations, the United States will be receiving £78,000,000 annually out of the £117,000,000 receivable by the Allies from Germany, or 67 per cent., plus £10,000,000 from Italy not covered by Reparations; or if we take the average payments, in lieu of the maximum, the United States will be receiving £66,000,000 out of £117,000,000, or 57 per cent. In either case Great Britain would receive, on balance, nothing.

It follows from the above that if the maximum Dawes Annuities were to be reduced by one-third—which, in the opinion of many of us, is highly probable—the United States will, by the time that the Allied payments to her have reached their full figure, be the sole beneficiary. In this event the net result of all the War Debt settlements would be to leave the United States—on balance and offsetting receipts against payments—receiving from Germany £78,000,000 per annum, and no one else getting anything.

I have put the calculation in this form because it renders it very clear why, in the minds of the Allies, the question of further relief to Germany is intimately bound up with the question of their own obligations to the United States. The official American attitude that there is no connection between the two, is a very hollow pretence. The resettlement of the Dawes Scheme is one to which the United States must be, in one way or another, a party. But—let me add—any concession she may make will go entirely to the relief of Germany and the European Allies, Great Britain adhering to her principle of receiving nothing on balance.

If all, or nearly all, of what Germany pays for Reparations has to be used, not to repair the damage done, but to repay the United States for the financial part which she played in the common struggle, many will feel that this is not an outcome tolerable to the sentiments of mankind or in reasonable accord with the spoken professions of Americans when they entered the war or afterwards. Yet it is a delicate matter, however keenly the public may feel, for any Englishman in authority to take the initiative in saying such things in an official way. Obviously, we must pay what we have covenanted to pay, and any proposal, if there is to be one, must come from the United States. It fell to my lot during the war to be the official draftsman



in the British Treasury of all the financial agreements with the Allies and with the United States out of which this situation has arisen. I was intimately familiar, day by day, with the reasons and motives which governed the character of the financial arrangements which were made. In the light of the memories of those days, I continue to hope that in due course, and in her own time, America will tell us that she has not spoken her last word.

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## RECORD OF AN AGRICULTURAL ESTATE SOLD IN 1920

### I.

[These articles contain the record of an estate since it was sold by its owner in 1920. Steps have been taken to hide its identity, but all the facts given are exactly stated, and it is not a composite picture made up out of facts collected from various places. The estate of 5,815 acres lies some sixty miles from a great industrial centre, and nine miles from the nearest town. The present article tells the story of the farmer, the second and concluding article, which will appear next week, will relate what has happened to the timber, small holdings, cottages, and the social life of the village.—ED., THE NATION.]

**T**HE Blankshire soil is poorish, with clay and gravel formations, letting at under £1 per acre on an average throughout the county, including farmhouses, cottages, and buildings. Most of the farms on this estate were well equipped in this respect, and the landlord was one of the best that could be found. A keen agriculturist himself, he farmed part of his land and is well known as a breeder of the cattle for which Blankshire is famous. He never stinted money on his farms, and was most ready to help in any way he could, but he decided to sell at the height of the 1920 boom because he needed the money which this estate represented in capital, but which failed to materialize as interest in the shape of rents. The sale made him the richer by something like £6,000 a year, although rents charged fell fairly well into line with customary rents in the district for similar land. It should be added that the estate represents some very good partridge shooting—a fact that has played a most important part in its history since the sale, as will be seen. The estate included seven farms, small holdings, a village, cottages, and a wood.

**FARM A** (1,030 acres, original rent £525).—Was a poor farm, but not so poor as it was by the time the tenant had finished with it. The tenant bought from the landlord at the 1920 sale at a preferential price, for in every case the landlord made a preliminary offer on favourable terms to existing tenants. The tenant was one of the worst farmers in England, a strong believer in extensive cultivation, but, when on the verge of bankruptcy, he sold his farm very well last year to a wealthy farmer who came up from the south, of whom it is too early to say anything as yet. The shooting on this farm is not as good as on the others. The ex-tenant has now taken up poultry-keeping.

**FARM B** (780 acres, rent £490).—Is a fair average farm, quite good in parts. It is farmed by a family who have been there for seven generations, and who are what one would call "steady" rather than "intelligent." A good deal of their farming practice is based on ancestor-worship, and they are pretty impervious to anything new. They bought their farm at the sale, but found it impossible to carry on with so much capital locked up. Therefore they were delighted to resell three years later at a profit of £1,000, becoming tenants of the same land once again. The new owner of it is a retired grocer on a large scale with a passion for partridges. He told me once that he

spent £4,000 a year in killing them, but was disappointed when I failed to congratulate him. He occasionally honours our district for week-ends in the shooting season, for he already had a house and a 2,000-acre shoot near by. This extra 800 acres rounded off his shoot nicely, so, as he was in a position to buy it out of income, he naturally snapped it up. This nearly caused a rival sportsman, who hitherto had leased this shoot, to have an apoplectic fit. None of the parties concerned are on speaking terms now. The land is managed by an agent in London. He is not such a bad landlord in the way of doing repairs (except to cottages), but as shooting is the only thing he is concerned with, he insists upon many irritating conditions from his tenants that will improve the sporting aspect at the expense of the agricultural. The land is overrun with game, vermin, and officious gamekeepers. He is perfectly useless to everyone and seldom seen. But he did begin with one philanthropic act. He allowed an old farm labourer, living on his Old Age Pension in an out-of-the-way cottage on the estate, to remain there, rent free! It was a useless and tumbled-down cottage, anyway. There is an unhappy sequel, however. This farm labourer had a dog, his sole companion. The dog was well trained and never taken out on the property except on a lead. Then a shocking thing happened. One day the dog broke its lead and put up a hare (this it could hardly fail to do, as I recently counted fifty in a twenty-five-acre field). The dog with its broken lead ran right into the infuriated grocer and his shooting party at 11.30 one morning. One hour and a half after this outrage, the grocer's emissary arrived at the labourer's cottage and delivered an ultimatum. The dog must be sent away within three days—or shot. Having nowhere to send it, and knowing that the penalty for refusal would be instant ejection, the old man chose death for his friend. I saw him a fortnight afterwards, and even then he cried when he told me the story. I was a Bolshevik for a month.

**FARM C** (850 acres, rent £625).—Was the best farm on the estate. Good land, as Blankshire land goes, compact in shape, well served with roads, good buildings. The sort of farm that always manages to produce one bumper crop of something every year to see the farmer through. It was bought by the tenant at the sale for £16,000, of which two-thirds remained on mortgage at 6 per cent. The tenant was a first-class farmer, born to the job, and a first-class man. But he could not afford, he said, to leave £4,000 locked up in the land and pay another £720 in interest on the mortgage, so after two years he sold to a Yorkshire cattle dealer for £20,000. The cattle dealer, who has now realized his ambition of becoming one of the "landed gentry," is still the owner, and it is the best farmed place in the neighbourhood, partly because he has ample funds, partly because he still deals in cattle, and so can dung his land generously. He is fairly unscrupulous as regards his men and his business, but he is a worker and always ready to do anything for the village, provided it means no sacrifice and plenty of publicity. He is considered in the village as a bad exchange for his predecessor, but he doesn't let his shooting to millionaires, and he does farm his land well. This, in village eyes, covers a multitude of sins.

**FARMS D, E. and F** (420, 570, and 400 acres, rents £220, £350, and £300).—Were bought at the sale for £18,000 by a young man whose grandfather had bequeathed the royalties on a very productive coal mine. He was already a tenant of Farm D, which he farmed through a bailiff, but entirely with a view to the shooting and to reducing his super-tax. Thus wheat was left standing uncut to attract game, and roots were grown not so much where agricultural conditions were suitable as where they would

fit in best with the "drives." Many times his bailiff has complained to me bitterly that he was not allowed to farm economically, but must subordinate good farming to good shooting. The young owner died last year at the age of thirty-three. The estate, including Farms E and F, has been offered since at £28,000, then at £24,000, with no buyer as yet, but several "nibblers." The reason why more money is asked than was paid at the height of the boom in 1920 is that the shooting is good, and good shoots are becoming scarce.

Farms E and F have been leased together to a Midlander for the last thirty-five years, first under the old owner, then under the new. The man is an excellent farmer, although he has complained all his life of the bankruptcy that has stared him in the face since the first month he took his farm on. Nevertheless, with a capital of about £9,000 he has always lived the life of a country gentleman, and never soiled his hands with work. He has brought up an expensive family of two girls and two boys, lived at a high standard of comfort, run two cars for many years, lost considerable sums speculating on the Stock Exchange, and yet his farm valuation to-day must stand well into double figures. On the death of his landlord he was at first a little nervous about his security of tenure, as he was a tenant on a seven-year lease. But he soon realized that no agriculturist could possibly buy the property at anything like the price asked; only a sportsman, whom nothing would satisfy better than to have a tenant "broken to the gun," so to speak, farming two-thirds of the estate. He would probably be only too pleased if the tenant would farm the other third also.

FARM G (475 acres, rent £270).—Bought by the tenant under the same conditions as the others. A compact little farm, but with much worthless land. The tenant is still the owner, much to everyone's surprise, for he has a passion for horseracing, about which he is known to be an indifferent prophet, and which has caused him to lose considerable sums for many years. But at the critical moment he inherited eight or ten thousand pounds.

#### FARMS: SUMMARY.

It will be seen that although all the farms concerned were sold to the tenants in 1920 at less than they would have fetched in the open market, yet only one of the original purchasers is left in possession to-day—the purchaser of the smallest, and he, I am convinced, would have had to sell also had not quite a substantial sum come into the family. In every case it was because the ex-tenant could not afford to leave a capital sum locked up in the land that represented so much more than his original rent. Among the new purchasers it will be noticed that all except one depend upon something other than agriculture for their means of livelihood. Well as the cattle-dealer's farm is conducted, I do not think he can have made very much off it in the last two years.

It will be seen also what a prominent part the accident of good partridge shooting plays in the history of such a countryside as ours round here. Its social significance is obvious, and economically it has the effect of putting the price of agricultural land outside the reach of *bona-fide* agriculturists, and creating a landlord class whose main interests must, by the nature of things, be often directly opposed to agricultural interests. Far from discouraging such an unsound state of affairs, the State directly helps it by allowing 75 per cent. of the shooting rates to be remitted. The old owner scorned to take advantage of the accidental mistake in the wording of the 1896 Agricultural Rates Act which makes this possible, but the new owners availed themselves of it at the first opportunity. The result is that the very people most annoyed by these super-

sportsmen are virtually subsidizing their shooting. The new landlords cannot be relied upon to regard sport in its proper proportion, or to attempt to face their responsibilities in buying up these little bits of England that we feel belong essentially to us all. There is no truer saying than "Hunting makes friends, but shooting makes enemies." Incidentally it makes vermin also, for the keepers kill the natural enemies of vermin and do not keep the vermin down; and it makes loafers, for there are many who depend upon their 6s. or so per day that they earn as beaters through the shooting season to see them through the winter, and take their chance with odd jobs or come on the parish in the other months.

In spite of the fact that the purchasing tenants could not afford to farm at the prices they paid in 1920, all the farms (excepting Farm A, for which no reliable figures are available) are fetching higher prices on reselling than in 1920, at the height of the land boom. The prices fetched also represent quite double the old rents, allowing for tithes, extra cost of repairs not shared between tenant and owner, &c. But the old rents were in line with other rents paid in the district for similar land, and must have fairly represented the *agricultural* value, otherwise, on a broad basis, farmers would have competed to offer higher rents for the opportunity of farming land that was unduly cheap. It is evident, therefore, that there are other "hidden values" in this land. Building value is not one of them in this case, but one is forced to believe that ownership of land still carries an amenity and a social value—i.e., it is still an advance in the social scale to be a landowner. But probably the greatest "hidden value" of all is the shooting value. Shooting has become such a plutocratic amusement, and there is such competition among the wealthy to buy good shooting land and so make quite certain of retaining the full facilities for this sport, that these entirely uneconomic prices are cheerfully paid. It is said that agriculturists should be grateful to these sportsmen who enable them to farm at an uneconomic rent, but it should not be forgotten that the sporting value itself has a great deal to do with making the capital value uneconomic in relation to the rent the *bona-fide* agriculturist would be justified in paying.

Thus artificial values of no benefit to the community are increasing the true soil value by something like 100 per cent. Either something must be done to restrain some of the social and economic evils of this over-emphasis of sport, or we must resign ourselves, in a district like this, to allowing sport and snobbishness to come first and food production and rural welfare to come a very poor second.

Y. Z.

## LIFE AND POLITICS

THE Conservatives are highly delighted with the impression made by Mr. Churchill's ingenious Budget. He has succeeded for the first time in convincing the Tories that he is really one of themselves. They think, to put it crudely, that he has picked a winner for the next general election—that the electors will vote under the stimulus of a sense of favours to come. Mr. Churchill is "featured," as they say on the films, as the leader of a great crusade; when he spoke on the wireless the other night his voice almost broke with emotion as he appealed to us all to follow him into the promised—the very much promised—land. It seems a pity to disturb the raptures of a party which hopes that it is now safe from disaster through the financial spell-binding of this complacent wizard. Still, we cannot all be Tories content to sing in



the chorus of gratitude and praise. There are critics so prosaic as seriously to doubt whether the thing is really workable, and whether the experiment is worth making. It all depends upon the approach. If you are an Olympian Chancellor, "saving" industry in Whitehall under the glare of electric light, you do not think much about the agricultural labourer who—while his employer gets off rate free—must pay more for the oil in his winter lamp. That must have seemed a vulgar trifle to a rhetorician setting out on a crusade. Again the gesture of relieving the rates of productive industry is truly magnificent, until one remembers (for instance) the case of the working-man in Manchester (say) who, after struggle and sacrifice, has moved out of the slums into a better house, and who is to get no relief at all from the consequent penalizing by the rate collector. Apart from the entirely problematical improvement in trade the Budget does nothing whatever for the rate-paying multitude. Mr. Churchill started off with his head in the air, but he has already stumbled over a tin of kerosene; and more falls await him.

\* \* \*

I think that young Mr. Basil Murray may be considered to have done reasonably well for the Liberals in the Marylebone election. No Liberal had ventured for twenty years to fight in an overwhelmingly Conservative constituency dominated by an able and popular member. There was never the slightest hope of a Liberal or a Labour victory. The result shows that marked decline in Conservative votes that is the fixed feature of recent by-elections, and a fall of about two thousand in the Labour poll, although Labour has "worked" Marylebone for a long time, and the district, like any other slice of the West of London, provides a violent contrast of rich and poor. What is deplorable in the election is the fact that the electors as a whole took very little interest in it. It will be a great misfortune if the era of vast electorates proves to be also the era of vast abstentions. The House of Commons has gained in Sir Rennell Rodd an excellent type of the experienced and cultivated Conservative, the master of a rather old-fashioned but wholly delightful style of speaking—on literature, at any rate.

\* \* \*

I suppose that the least inquisitive of us turned to the first instalment of Lord Oxford's War Diary in the DAILY TELEGRAPH with some excitement. It was reasonable to suppose that these intimate records, jotted down from day to day through the tremendous crisis of August, 1914, would allow us to hear at last the authentic voice of the man, in a way that he never permitted the public to hear it throughout his life. In fact the Diary is almost comically disappointing to those who look for the personal note. These "contemporary jottings," made for his private use and with no thought of publication, are strangely, even inhumanly, impersonal. It seems incredible that the Diary can be a faithful reflection of what was going on in his mind and heart at that time, and one is driven to the guess that not even to the secrecy of a private diary would Asquith confide. There is one and only one expression of personal feeling. On August 4th he casually notes "so we sent the Germans an ultimatum to expire at midnight," and adds, "The whole thing fills me with sadness." The comment might be appropriate after an adverse vote in the House of Commons. The world was falling about his ears, and he remarks, "The whole thing fills me with sadness"! The Diary is so uncannily mild in tone that even this sounds over-emphatic. If this Diary is to be accepted as a faithful expression of his thoughts and feelings in those terrible days, Lord Oxford was a fortunate man.

So much for one's first impressions of this extraordinary Diary. On a second reading one begins to feel the charm of it as an unconscious revelation of character. There is something in the string of tame understatements which is extremely soothing. The other reminiscences of the great with which the world has been favoured—or pestered—usually indicate a general turmoil of excitement in which politicians almost forgot to intrigue. Lord Beaverbrook, it is true, was not too agitated to take notes of the confidences vouchsafed him by Mr. Bonar Law, but in the innermost circle all was consternation, doubt and shattering agitations. When everything was drifting and breaking away all round him, Mr. Asquith, magnificent, imperturbable, kept his head by the process of remaining staunchly attached to the familiar things. On the fateful day when the Germans entered Belgium he writes, "This simplifies matters," and he passes on to note the important fact that the House got through all the business by half-past four. Ordinary folk on the fringe of the calamity used to wonder sometimes how those at the heart of responsibility could be standing the terrible strain. Perhaps our anxiety was superfluous so far as the author of these "Contemporary Notes" with his precious gift of detachment was concerned.

\* \* \*

We are just beginning to realize the loss of health and efficiency which follows from allowing our working population to live starved of light. Our smoke abatement laws are grossly defective, and we tamely submit to a pollution of the air which means that whole areas of great cities exist forever under a pall of grime. I have just read with great interest a report which gives the results of the working of the artificial sunlight clinic at the Sherwood Colliery. At this colliery the directors, with great public spirit, installed a clinic, in co-operation with the New Health Society and the Sunlight League, to test the effect of subjecting the workers to regular doses of light. A hundred lads between the ages of fourteen and seventeen were selected. Fifty had two baths of ultra-violet light weekly, the other fifty were not treated. At the end of three months the boys of each group were reweighed and measured. It was found that the boys who had been treated had on the average gained twice as much in weight as those who had not, while they had increased in height 50 per cent. more. The "treated" boys had improved noticeably in appearance, in spirits, and in appetite, and this in spite of the fact that they were living on a "deficiency" diet. The clinic is being used by the adult miners with most beneficial results, especially to those suffering from rheumatism and skin diseases, and the miners' children suffering from various ailments have benefited also. This report is most encouraging reading, and shows triumphantly how much can be done by the application of a little scientific common sense to counteract the evils of industry.

\* \* \*

I hope that Mr. Baldwin will continue the good work of advertising neglected books in his speeches. His mention of the work of Mary Webb has created for that shy and exquisite artist a posthumous fame which is not without irony. A little of this appreciation would have cheered her immensely if it had come while she was still alive to enjoy it. Mr. Baldwin ought to select a living writer for his next advertisement. Mr. Gladstone's famous postcards had an immediate effect on the sales of the novel which had stirred his enthusiasm; unfortunately they were usually bad novels. Mr. Baldwin has a sound taste in literature, as one might conclude from the sole evidence of his liking for the work of the author of "Precious Bane." Mary Webb was certainly not unknown to discerning readers; her successive novels were highly praised by good critics,

and her masterpiece which was distinguished by one of the literary prizes was selling in a cheap edition before Mr. Baldwin spoke. At the same time, it would be unreasonable to expect a wide popularity for work so fine in quality. Her narrative is slow and her accent low-toned and wistful. "Precious Bane" pleased me particularly by its beautiful atmosphere and its recapture of departed country life. The book is full of out of the way folklore and Shropshire dialect, which would be rather teasing were not the odd words so picturesque. It is a book for quiet folk.

Mr. Henry Ford endeared himself to us on this side by showing that great riches need be no bar to simplicity. He began by confiding to the interviewers opinions of a singular ingenuousness. When he was banqueted he declined to make a speech—from sheer shyness, according to his friends. In his restless wanderings about England he betrayed interests far removed from the bleak utilitarianism of Detroit. His stay in Manchester was unexpectedly brief, and he seemed glad to get away from motor-cars to something more suggestive of old England and the antique. (Mr. Ford's interest in antiques extends, it is true, to the early Fords.) He was found in the places to which all good sentimental Americans go—the places that are as unlike Detroit as possible. He lingered in the carefully preserved antiquity of the "Cheshire Cheese," and was next sighted in an authentically venerable Cotswold village. He was supposed all the while to have some mysterious and vastly important commercial aim in view, but I suspect that the report was put about because a motor-car king is expected by his compatriots to stagger the world with gigantic schemes. The richest man in the world is, one suspects, a very simple soul, chiefly anxious to escape from the burden of his prodigious millions.

I knew Sir Ebenezer Howard for many years. I always thought of him as the most fortunate of men and the least spoiled by success. It is given to few men devoured by a great idea to live to see it take actual working shape and prove its soundness to the sceptics and men of business. Thirty years ago Howard, then and for long afterwards a professional shorthand writer, wrote a little book putting forth the Garden City plan. The seed took root and flourished with amazing speed into the new community at Letchworth, in which reformers from all over the world have found the pattern of a new type of town, firmly based on sound economics and preserving for the dweller the space and health of the country. Howard had the fortune to obtain the help of able and enthusiastic men in the embodiment of his dream, but the impulse was his own. He was singularly modest and unaffected: the perfect type of the disinterested benefactor of his kind, and as such he must take a very distinguished place when stock is taken of the social advancements of our time.

KAPPA.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### AMERICAN OPINION AND THE SIZE OF SHIPS

SIR,—I notice that in your issue of March 31st you point out that "there are encouraging signs that American opinion is disposed to consider on its merits the British proposal for reducing the size and extending the agreed life of capital ships."

In this connection, may I draw attention to the following significant passages in a speech made in the House of Representatives on March 21st by Mr. Burton L. French, the Chair-

man of the Naval Appropriations Committee, in introducing the Navy Department Appropriation Bill for the ensuing financial year? The quotations are from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:—

"At the Geneva Conference last year various proposals were considered of fixing the life of various types. . . . No results were obtained. But may we not pursue this question? If obsolescence is a controlling factor in fixing the life of battleships or cruisers or submarines, then if all nations were to agree upon a definite arbitrary life of more extended years, obsolescence would be a factor common in like measure to all nations, and hence no nation would be at a disadvantage by extending the average period of replacement. . . . May I suggest another possible programme? Why by agreement should we not strike lower figures in numbers of types of ships beyond which we may not build? . . . Why do the United States and Great Britain require fifteen capital ships each, and why Japan nine? Why not ten each for the United States and Great Britain and six for Japan, and corresponding ratios for other nations? . . . Consider another factor that should challenge at once the Great Powers who are parties to the Washington Treaty. Under present plans the entire replacement programme for battleships of the United States, save alone the 'Colorado' and the 'West Virginia,' will occur within a period of ten years, or from 1921 to 1941. The 'Colorado' and 'West Virginia' would follow two years later. As great a turn-over must be met within the same period by Great Britain and Japan. This factor should drive home the thought of extension of life of capital ships and the lessening of numbers to the end that the annual naval budget may be reduced."

There is good reason to believe that Mr. French is very much in earnest about these proposals. His views derive added weight from the responsible position he occupies in Congress.—Yours, &c.,

LEONARD STEIN.

26, East 63rd Street, New York.

April 18th, 1928.

## THE PETROL TAX

SIR,—How do you arrive at your conclusions that the private owners, mainly joy-riders, pay an adequate contribution to the upkeep of the roads and that we industrial users do not? I think it must be surmise in each case.

I am at the head of one of the two last surviving country flour mills in this district; I also own very nearly all the capital.

In my young days I can remember twelve flour mills running within a radius of ten miles from this mill; now there remain ourselves and two others still making flour; of these, this mill is much the larger, and is largely engaged in the London trade.

With the exception of the two other smaller mills that are still making flour, the remaining mills are confined to making provender or are derelict.

In 1926 the tax on our fleet of six lorries amounted to £140—1927 it was increased to £310; the petrol tax will add a further £280 a year to our taxes on transport. Altogether our taxes have increased from £140 to £590. Against this we may, in eighteen months' time, receive £99 off our rates; then the tax of £590, less £99, will amount to more than our rent and rates put together, which now amount to a total of £372.

If one of the intentions of the Budget is to confine industries of all kinds to the towns, it may well achieve this result, as transport must always be a large factor of cost in carrying on rural industries, especially in the heavy trades such as this is.

We are carrying on a precarious existence, I may honestly say, mainly in the interest of our staff and employees, many of whom have grown grey in our service, but the Budget taxes, coupled with the previous heavy increase, may well prove the last handful of nails in our coffin, and fifty country workers, mainly married men with families, would then lose their present employment.

Agriculture in this district would feel our absence, as we buy and collect most of the wheat grown in the district and redistribute the offals amongst the farmers.

The severe competition with the port mills and the co-operative mills precludes us making any increase in our charges.

The advent of the motor-lorry saved these mills from



extinction; the heavy taxation now imposed goes far to invalidate the salvation.—Yours, &c.,

King's Langley, Herts.  
May 1st, 1928.

T. W. TOOVEY.

### SCHOOL BRANCHES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS UNION

SIR,—My attention has just been drawn to some words in your issue of April 21st which seem to imply that someone—surely not yourself—suspects the Headmasters' Conference of opposing, or even "forbidding" (!) the formation of School branches of the League of Nations Union.

If it is thought necessary for me to deny this, I beg to do so officially and categorically. The Conference is represented on the Education Committee of the Union, and, though I have no figures at hand, I conjecture that such branches exist in more than half of the schools represented on the Conference. More might be said, but I am unwilling to waste your space.—Yours, &c.,

R. CARY GILSON,

Chairman of the Committee of the  
Headmasters' Conference.

King Edward's School, Birmingham.  
April 30th, 1928.

### AN ASPECT OF THE GUTTERIDGE MURDER

SIR,—There is a point with regard to the murderers of Police-Constable Gutteridge which I have not seen mentioned in any of the Press articles. When Browne, obviously the moving spirit, was about fifteen or sixteen, what is legally known as a "young person," he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment. It was probably then that he made acquaintance with criminals and that his life entered the criminal groove in which it has continued ever since. Had he been put on probation, or sent to a reformatory where there were good workshops, as there are now at Redhill and elsewhere, the country might have been the richer for a talented and ingenious inventor, and Police-Constable Gutteridge still alive.

While one is thankful that only very few children of that or any age go to prison now, since the revolutionary reforms initiated by Lord Gladstone when he was at the Home Office; it is not sufficiently realized that nevertheless some are sent there still. Boys and girls between fourteen and sixteen may be sent to prison while on remand; after conviction and while awaiting the assembling of Quarter Sessions who have the authority not possessed by the magistrate who tried them to send them to Borstal, and for non-payment of fines. In addition to these half-accidental occasions, far too many benches, in the teeth of continued protests official and philanthropic, still sentence to short terms of imprisonment of three months and under. I have never met or heard of anyone acquainted with the problem of young offenders who did not condemn the practice. A short sentence does not deter and does not reform. By bringing the boys in contact with confirmed criminals it tends to suggest a criminal career and to provide them with criminal associates. The officials do their best to keep the young offenders separate; but the construction of our prisons and the fact that "old lags" bring the art of communicating without being found out to a high pitch of skill make it extremely difficult. Whatever else is done with young offenders of this age, a prison where there are adult criminals should be absolutely closed to them.

One consequence of combining the two can be seen from this same murder case. Browne and Kennedy, we learn, are to be hanged at Wandsworth. In one of the wings of Wandsworth prison is established the observation centre where difficult cases of boy offenders are sent for a thorough mental and physical examination, before it is decided to which institution they shall be sent or what other treatment shall be applied. For the next three weeks the skilled and devoted people who undertake this difficult task will have to carry it on through all the atmosphere of morbid excitement,

sensational gossip, and horrified curiosity let loose by an execution in the prison where it takes place. It is impossible to imagine anything more destructive of their work. If we consider executions necessary (a point of which I am personally unconvinced), it might surely be secured that they never take place at Wandsworth.—Yours, &c.,

LUCY MASTERMAN.

### MR. BELLOC'S HISTORY

SIR,—Mr. Belloc is at his usual trick of imputing ignorance to people whose real crime is that they are in possession of facts which happen to be treated as contraband in his own sect. I was Mr. Hudson's near neighbour and frequent companion at Eastbourne when he was editing this present disputed Tithing Roll for the Selden Society. In 1906, when he edited it again with another facsimile and full discussion in his great History of Norwich, he kindly presented me with that book. It is only on questions of interpretation that Mr. Hudson and I differ from Mr. Belloc. This question of mediæval population may be of real interest to some of your readers; so I gladly discuss it more fully here. This can be done most clearly by contrasting Mr. Belloc's deductions from our Roll with Mr. Hudson's, who had probably handled the document before Mr. Belloc was born.

(Hudson) The roll contains 690 names; (Belloc) it contains 994. He cannot possibly have seen either the Roll or a specimen facsimile, as we know from his blunder about the tithings; these are clearly marked on the Roll, which shows that Mancroft subleet consisted not of a single tithing, but more than thirty. It seems evident, therefore, that Mr. Belloc or his informant has counted *all* the names on the Roll, whereas large numbers of them have been crossed off for death and others added; the Roll had been used and tinkered on many occasions: the 690 represents one year, 994 represents several. This inflated number Mr. Belloc then multiplies by five, assuming falsely that the names represent only "heads of families." In fact, they represent all the males over twelve years of age, including boys and unmarried servants; therefore Mr. Hudson multiplies by less than two; thus he reaches only 1,100 where Mr. Belloc reaches 5,000. This 1,100 Mr. Hudson then multiplies by four (since our list covers one quarter of the city), and certain allowances are added for extras. Here he is perfectly right, for such a rough calculation as he is undertaking; those portions which lay outside the four leets were almost negligible for this purpose. Nearly all the Prior's fee was simply monastic precincts; the castle fee was a very small area; the monks and their dependents and the castle garrison cannot have amounted altogether to five hundred souls, and probably not to more than three hundred. As to the villages outside, nobody in 1349 would have spoken of them as parts of Norwich, nor, even if we illegitimately intrude them, would their total population have come to one thousand persons. Yet, by counting these districts as each containing five thousand souls, and by blundering over the "Tithings," Mr. Belloc convinces himself that the Mancroft Roll represents "certainly much less than one-sixth of the total population, and probably not more than one-tenth." By these methods he inflates his figures to fifty thousand; but beyond that he cannot get; and he still leaves us asking how the Plague could remove 57,374 souls from a population of fifty thousand. What word but "ludicrous" will fit all this? I may add that Mr. Hudson's calculations are to a considerable extent corroborated by a quite independent document, the Subsidy-Roll of 1332; that this Subsidy Roll remained the standard for long after the Black Death, showing that the city cannot have been hopelessly decimated; and that he can prove seventeen out of thirty-two bailiffs to have survived the Plague, and twenty-seven out of fifty-four councillors.

Mr. Belloc calls upon me to confess; and I will confess that, trusting to my survey of these figures in 1906, I slightly exaggerated by accepting Mr. Hudson's calculations too exactly. I now think that he does not multiply enough in the first instance; it might be safer to infer from these 690 tithing-men not merely 1,100 but 2,000 souls; or possibly even 2,500. Therefore, whereas I gave the population, in my review, as "probably about six thousand, and almost certainly within ten thousand," I would write now more

cautiously "possibly as few as six thousand, more probably about eight thousand, but almost certainly under twelve thousand." Since he twice accuses me of "evading," yet has himself kept silence upon several most important points which I have raised, may I repeat that, if he has one-tenth of the confidence he professes, he may expose my inaccuracies at my own expense, far more fully than is possible in the limited space here? Until then, may I suggest that he is continuing this correspondence merely because he is demoralized by the constant attempt to keep up appearances, at any cost, in a cause which is historically indefensible?—Yours, &c.,

St. John's College, Cambridge.  
April 25th, 1928.

G. G. COULTON.

### NO PASSPORTS FOR WEEK-ENDS

SIR,—With reference to the paragraph which appeared in your paper on the 21st inst. stating that passports would be needed with week-end tickets to France, I wish to inform you that on the 20th inst. the French Ministry of the Interior issued the following statement:—

"The new regulation regarding week-end tickets which was to have come into force on June 1st, is suspended *sine die*, and will come up for a second examination, the aim of which will be to reconcile the necessities of national security and commercial interests."

I should be much obliged if you would kindly publish this information.—Yours, &c.,

MAURICE VIGNON, Director.

Office Français du Tourisme,  
56, Haymarket, London, S.W.1.

### "WESTMINSTER VOICES"

SIR,—I have been reading the sketches in Mr. James Johnston's ingratiating book, "Westminster Voices." It makes me half wish I had been in the Press Gallery watching the personalities with an eye to the revelation of character. And now why cavil at a feast?

"Chamberlain Dynasty." I consider Ramsay MacDonald far better at F.O. than Sir Austen Chamberlain. R. M. the best at F.O. since the war for reconciling and ingeminating peace in Europe. Sir Austen is "worthy," and, Locarno notwithstanding, France has seven alliances. A gentleman but a "great gentleman"? The Father was a Victorian, but the sons are Georgians.

"Lord Grey." Heard his voice once, for ever involved in the tragedy of the war. Lady Oxford, I believe, has said he is more interested in the company of birds than of people. Strange spokesman for Armageddon.

"Sir John Simon." Heard him not long since on proportional representation—he seemed "a miniature" John Wesley. After his speech on the strike, he will be hardly successful at Spen Valley again. But Justice Simon?

"Lord Oxford." A beautiful and probably a true appreciation by Mr. Johnston is to be found on pages 54 and 55 beginning, "But a summons," and ending "remotest of Parliaments." It is a classic. I am disposed to question the verdicts of Mr. Johnston and Sir E. Gosse, that Lord Oxford's speeches are literature. They lack glow; they are pruned; still they may be literature. I heard Mr. Asquith's voice at Spurgeon's Tabernacle on disestablishment soon after he became M.P.—there was no sign of humility in this product of Balliol then. Heard him at Plymouth when Home Secretary, able, cogent, and likened himself to a commercial traveller for the Government. It was a fighting Austerlitz speech. The last time was in recent years, at Edgware, mellowed, kindly, tolerant. I am a John Morleyite, but we were all sorry at Lord Oxford's passing. We feared he died disappointed after the day's work. It brought back sympathy as ever for seeming failure in life:—

"Spirits push'd away  
In the hot press of the noon-day."

—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD GILLBARD.

St. Margaret's, Dean Road, Willesden Green, N.W.

### ELIA'S G. D.

HAD the mild friend of Elia, George Dyer, been present in the sale-room of Messrs. Hodgson the other day, he would have blushed with a modest pride for his own poetic worth; for a volume of his verses, inscribed by him, and conspicuously referred to in the auctioneers' announcements, reached the respectable price of three guineas. The guileless bard, whose meditative plunge into the New River inspired Elia to so gay a narration, might have been excused for thinking that his versificatory labours, ode, and elegy, and sonnet, had not been in vain; that unobtruded merit had won the battle of time; that he too was numbered among the sweet psalmists of England. No change of taste, however, will ever revise the true cause of G. D.'s immortality, the secret of his rise to sale-room distinction; he would be a little hurt to know the ins and outs of his hold on posterity; without the revelry of Lamb's elvish wit and triumph in personal oddity, this grave manipulator of iambs and alexandrines would have been beyond recall. Hazlitt, Hunt, Cowden Clarke, and others indeed noted him well, and plenty of alluring anecdotes of the Dyerian innocence, untidiness, and absent-minded freaks are to be found here and there; but still it is due to the pleasure and laughter of Lamb which Dyer evoked that we now see him cutting so dignified a figure in the arena of bibliophily. Few of the true stock of bookmen would not welcome a relic of the hero of "Amicus Redivivus," of "Oxford in the Vacation," of Lamb's letters to Manning and Rickman; the faithful seeker after truth who at Lamb's suggestion went to Primrose Hill before sunrise to see the Persian Ambassador worship, and who, having some subject of serious cast in his mind, left the house of a nobleman with the footman's gilt hat surmounting his own ancient clothes, and on another occasion even clapped a small convenient coalscuttle on his preoccupied head.

Yet Dyer, we know, did not relish every aspect of Elia's humour and character-study. He was, in the phrase of Augustus de Morgan, "a man in whom want of humour amounted to a positive endowment." The account of his struggles given by Lamb in "Oxford in the Vacation" ("he commenced life as usher to a knavish fanatic schoolmaster," and so forth), drew from him a complaint, which a friend brought to Elia's notice, with the result that the offending passage was expunged from the essay. This was in 1820, and fifteen years later we find the same friend remembering Dyer's painful feelings under the pleasantries of Elia, and writing to him: "Lamb's death and the comments on his character and writings, revived recollections of the disquiet that was at first caused you by the appearance of one of his essays in the LONDON MAGAZINE and the correspondence to which it gave rise while we knew not who Elia was." Lamb's tribute to Dyer by way of apology thoroughly satisfied the subject, and there was no further misunderstanding between essayist and bard until that one which left Dyer scrambling out of the New River at Islington and delighted Lamb's mind so much. (We may imagine that he was not least gratified with G. D.'s "Aquatic Incursion" on the score that those qualified to judge seemed to expect Charles Lamb to be the first to emerge from his cottage into the water.)

Everyone knows what Lamb wrote on Dyer, but what Dyer wrote on Lamb is not so brightly illumined. Probably there was more from that toilsome hand, that broad and diminished script in ungodly union, than can easily be recognized. Passing over the friendly salute to Lamb's youthful sonnets and blank verse, seen in one of the many footnotes to Dyer's "Poet's Fate"—at that time, 1797, Dyer was a person of importance—we may linger over the



anonymous articles on Lamb's "Works," 1818, in the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE of the following year. These papers were by Dyer, and exhibit him in a state of some apprehension, aware that Lamb was (in the words of another poet of their circle as tame as Dyer) "a mystery to me," and yet attempting to keep up the critical, imperturbable, pedagogic dignity of Sylvanus Urban. Above all, despite the sternly affected veil of impersonality, we cannot but feel how Dyer enjoyed the cordial though incalculable nature of his friend, and rose to the height of perceiving a strong tinge of nonsensicality in his expressions:—

"But first," says Dyer, "as to our Author's poetry: and here we perceive we must be cautious of handling Charles Lamb, in our critical capacity, seeing he will be liable to slip through our fingers. . . . There are many poetical sketches in his works, in which, though the Author appears somewhat *propria persona*, yet he evidently often gives us a touch of the dramatic. Of this description are Hypochondriacus, a Vision of Repentance; and, we suspect, some others. They are well done, in their way; that is to say, they are poetical, and we are pleased; but we need not be (we suspect) extravagant in our sympathies; our real sympathies may be reserved for the proper occasions."

As he proceeds, Dyer's suspicion assumes an air of intimacy:—

"His 'Farewell to Tobacco' is a sort of *mixt* poem. We are inclined to think that we here discover something of the real Charles Lamb, struggling with strong passion, with love and hate of tobacco; though we suspect that here also is much that is purely dramatic. But whether Mr. Lamb is really speaking in his own, or a borrowed character, his more particular friends, 'his blest Tobacco boys,' best know. Speaking in our own humble capacity, *more critico*, we must say, that this little *fancy work* possesses great merit, being replete with whim, wit, and naiveté, of poetical and classical pictures, and that Mr. Charles Lamb is thereby entitled to all his *poetica licentia*, together with a dispensation (so far as he may be personally introduced into this Poem) to smoke as long as he pleases, or to leave off smoking as soon as he pleases."

One may fancy the old critic's smile (it was about this time that Henry Meyer's portrait, now quietly gazing out over the Fitzwilliam Museum, was painted) as he felt he had at last hoist Lamb with his own petard.

Dyer survived Lamb six years, and wrote at least two short memoirs of his friend, one in the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, from which the deeply admiring estimate of Lamb's genius and society may valuably be repeated. Lamb has praised, not Dyer's verse, but his prose, which certainly has a tone of scholarly maturity. "On considering Mr. Lamb as diligently engaged in the pursuits of commercial life"—how Lamb would have twinkled at this generous summary of his office hours!—

"it might surprise us that he could find leisure to write so much for the public; but the truth is his faculties were extraordinary. The wit that he brought with him from school continued to flow uniformly and to increase through the whole course of his life. It was almost as natural with him to say witty things as to breathe; he could not enter a room without a joke, and he may be said to have almost conversed in extemporaneous humour. Nor did his discourse consist of merely sportive pleasantries; they had often the force of eloquence, joined with the solidity of argument, enlivened and softened by a humanity and benevolence which invariably beamed in his countenance. Perhaps, too, they were a little increased by his very infirmities; for he had a defect in his utterance, which gave a somewhat of quaintness and peculiarity of tone to his conversation. Overflowing as his spirits were, they never exceeded the bounds of propriety and decorum; and towards the fair sex, though he was never married, he never failed to evince the kindest feeling and purest respect."

The last sentence is serenest Dyer; the whole passage shines with an enviable excellence of spirit when we reflect that the writer was eighty years old.

At the end of Dyer's second volume of "Poetics" may be found an unnoticed and agreeable passage preserving the friendship of Dyer, Lamb, and Coleridge. While Dyer's remarks on poetry had been waiting for publication, he encountered a difficulty:—

"I was invited by my ingenious friend Mr. Charles Lamb, to hear two of Mr. Coleridge's lectures. One happened to take a turn, which led Mr. Coleridge to consider Poetry, as it more immediately depends on the Imagination; and he judiciously made its characteristic difference from Philosophy, or Science, to consist, in its being the work of the Imagination. With what I heard, I was greatly delighted; but I immediately felt, that while the eloquent Lecturer had enlarged my views, he had crippled my exertions. For I had certainly two or three more ideas, which belonged to this place; but perceiving myself in danger of going over the same ground with Mr. Coleridge. . . ."

And so he goes on, moved by his comical, anxious modesty and integrity of mind, until presently he points out that, his volume having been practically printed off before Coleridge's lectures began, "it must appear, that as any harmony, or synchronism of thought, can only have been accidental, so any difference of sentiment could not have proceeded from anything like premeditated opposition." As usual, George's fears of misconstruction were unnecessary. Coleridge to the end of his days regarded Dyer as an unimprovable friend. "George Dyer must stand alone! He may have a few second cousins, but no full brother."

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

## MUSIC

### TONALITY AND ATONALITY

ALTHOUGH it is only a few weeks ago that I had occasion to refer to Schönberg in these columns, in connection with the recent performance of his early "Gurrelieder," no apology, I think, need be given for reverting to the subject, since there can be little doubt in the mind of anyone who takes an intelligent interest in modern music that by far the most crucial and momentous issue of recent years is that which is raised by the later work of this composer, and by the school to which it has given rise. It seems, indeed, at first sight, to constitute a direct challenge to all our accepted ideas, and to all the principles which have hitherto governed musical art. Is this to be the music of the future, as its adherents claim, or is it only a temporary aberration destined to pass away leaving no trace behind it, as its opponents would have it? Is the old tonal system, on which music has been more or less securely based for so many centuries, capable of further development and exploitation, or is it merely an outworn convention for which the time has come for it to be relegated to the scrap-heap, and replaced by the atonal, twelve-note, chromatic scale exemplified in this new music?

Such is the important nature of the questions that it imperatively requires us to ask ourselves, and to which we must find an answer. No such fundamental issue as this, it may be noted, is involved in the work of any other contemporary composer or group of composers, not even in that of the most ostensibly revolutionary and iconoclastic among them. For a time, it is true, Stravinsky seemed to be on the verge of throwing in his lot with the champions of atonality, but he has recently executed one of his customary somersaults and reverted to a great extent to the principles of tonality. Similarly the art of Bartók, despite the slight harmonic affinity—more apparent than real—which it is often supposed to have to that of Schönberg, is, melodically speaking at least, still fundamentally tonal in its implications, and none of the members of the more "advanced" French, German, Italian, or any other schools has as yet manifested the slightest disposition to follow in the footsteps of the Austrian master, inclining in the direction of polytonality

—i.e., the practice of writing in two or more keys simultaneously—rather than in that of atonality, or no key at all.

It is with a comparatively small group of composers, then, that we are here concerned, consisting of Schönberg, von Webern, Alban Berg, Hauer, and one or two opportunists and hangers-on of doubtful antecedents, such as Hindemith; but it would be a great mistake to infer that it is for this reason of only slight importance. Not only does it unquestionably comprise several of the most gifted musicians of the present time, but the influence, both practical and theoretical, which it exerts is in inverse ratio to its size, and tends, moreover, continually to increase.

The argument in favour of the doctrines of atonality is briefly as follows. The steadily increasing chromaticism of the music of the last fifty years and more has at last completely undermined the integrity and sapped the vitality of the old diatonic scale system; melodic intervals and harmonic progressions formerly regarded as unrelated or foreign to the scale have gradually become assimilated and naturalized to such an extent as to assume an importance and a standing equal to that possessed by its original diatonic constituents. The time has now come, therefore, it is held, to take the final and logical step of throwing overboard the last remnants and vestiges of the old order, with its fixed tonic or tonal centre to which all the other intervals were, in their various degrees, regarded as related and subservient, and of recognizing the equal status and importance, the absolute validity of every note in the chromatic scale.

Once this has been accomplished, it is contended, an immense enrichment of harmonic resource inevitably follows. Now, this may be true enough in theory, but in theory alone. For in the first place, the composer, in order to attain to the ideal of pure atonality or keylessness, is compelled to discard from his harmonic vocabulary all combinations of tones consisting not merely exclusively, but even largely, of the formerly diatonic notes of the chromatic scale—comprising no less than seven out of the total twelve, be it remembered—otherwise a momentary sense of tonality will inevitably result, and this is what must above all things be avoided in the new music. (In the words of Erwin Stein, one of the theorists of the movement, in his essay "Neue Formprinzipien," "Wendungen, die an die alten Tonarten erinnern, werden vermieden.") But it is in the melodic aspect of the problem that the full consequences of this exclusion are apparent. To create a melodic line of any length in which no succession of intervals gives us even a momentary illusion of tonality is exceedingly difficult. Let anyone who doubts this try for himself. He will inevitably find that he cannot let himself go for one moment without sliding backwards into tonality, and even when he has been most successful the result will generally give the impression of a diatonic melody merely twisted and gone awry, like a familiar face reflected in a distorting mirror. This impression can only be wholly avoided by relying almost entirely on the most angular and asymmetrical intervals, in consequence of which a high degree of monotony is inevitably engendered—a monotony which is moreover further intensified by the absence of any modulatory interest, for this is automatically excluded by the substitution of one universal scale for the twenty-four scales of the old system.

The commonplace criticism, therefore, that Schönberg and his followers write recklessly without considering what they are doing is so far from being true that the very contrary is the case; they have to take just as much trouble to avoid falling into diatonic solecisms as the old composers had to take in order to avoid dissonances.

Whatever it may be in theory then, atonality in practice amounts not to an extension but rather to a positive restriction of resources compared to what we have at the present time: to the substitution of a chromatic tyranny in place of the former diatonic tyranny which, incidentally, no longer exists except in the minds of theorists. The point is that there is no freedom under the Schönberg regime. The right to use any and every progression that happens to suit one's purpose is no more recognized or tolerated by it than by the pedants of the old order. Atonality, in short, is only a form of inverted academicism, and its

champions could make out a very much better case for it if they were to say exactly the opposite of what they actually say, and were to claim that music to-day suffers from too much liberty, often amounting to anarchy, that what it needs more than anything else is austerity, discipline, and a deliberate restriction of resources, such as is afforded by the adoption of atonality. From that point of view, indeed, there is a good deal to be said for it.

Atonality, in short, is in its essence the musical counterpart to the universal reaction against freedom, liberalism, and individualism, which is to be observed to-day in every walk of life, social, political, and artistic. As such it is undoubtedly useful as a salutary corrective to the anarchic excesses of much modern music, and in addition a considerable amount of the music of Berg and Schönberg in particular may readily be conceded to possess a permanent interest and an æsthetic value as being the expression of their remarkable personalities; but that the narrow and tortuous path they have traced out for themselves is destined to be the high-road by which composers of the future will travel is, to say the very least, highly improbable.

CECIL GRAY.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

**P**LAYROOM SIX are providing a good entertainment with the "Lottery," a newly discovered and very lively little musical comedy by Henry Fielding. The play, dealing continually with country cousins entrapped by the immoralists of London, contains some very skilful lyrics and moves along with the broad good-nature that has endeared Fielding to two centuries of English readers. The music, "arranged and composed" by Mr. Barclay Wilson, was also very gay and adequate. In fact the raw material was always of sufficiently high a quality to be in no ways dependent on the modish "gingering up" of the production. Why cannot either the bodies or the faces of the actors be allowed a moment's repose during an eighteenth-century comedy? The *décor* also struck me as too chatty and arch. It is noteworthy that the last act when so many people were packed on to the tiny stage that they were forcibly immobilized, was the act which moved with the greatest grace. These criticisms are not meant to suggest that the "Lottery" is not well worth a visit, merely that if only the producer had taken a little less trouble we should have enjoyed ourselves even more.

It is a hopeless task for a critic to pass judgment on a blank verse play that he has never had a chance of reading. Mr. W. G. Hole's "Queen Elizabeth" at the Everyman Theatre, tries to make its dramatic appeal by "literary" methods (the best methods), but only familiarity with the text can enable one to form an opinion of the work. At first sight the blank verse appears efficient rather than sublime, and the author has not dared sufficiently, perhaps, to break with the dramatic conventions of the Elizabethan stage. The diction was too reminiscent of Shakespeare. On the other hand, Mr. Hole, by having most of the action "off" and endowing the play with a psychological inconclusiveness, has endeavoured to bring his tragedy into touch with modern sensibility. The character of Queen Elizabeth was based on modern taste and modern scholarship, while the appearance of Miss Nancy Price was superb. Mr. Hole cut out the action and as a result found it difficult to endow the play with very much movement. The result was an interested and thrilling evening. Only a closer study of the text will enable the critic to say whether Mr. Hole has in him the makings of a real dramatic poet.

Musical comedy depends so much upon the "personality" of the actors that one is often apt, when commenting on this form of entertainment, to attribute success or failure to what one sees and hears rather than to what, in a serious play, one would look for in the way of underlying technique. Indeed it is with something of a jolt that one realizes that musical comedy has any technique

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at all. "So this is Love!" at the Winter Garden Theatre is a shining example of technique successfully applied. There is just the right amount of everything, blended in just the right sequence and served with just enough originality and wit to make one forget that one has heard the same jokes, watched the same dances and listened to the same tunes, not once but a hundred times before. Mr. Stanley Lupino, who is part author as well as chief comedian, has boundless comic invention, and uses it to enormous advantage. His scene in the first act with Miss Connie Emerald—a delightful actress—is a triumph of calculated fooling. Mr. Laddie Cliff is amusing as an American, and the inevitable musical comedy sentiment is adequately provided by Mr. Cyril Ritchard and Miss Madge Elliott. The "lyrics" of Mr. Desmond Carter are well above the average, and the slickness and general efficiency of the production is ascribable to Mr. Leslie Henson.

Ibsen's "The Pretenders," produced last week by the Festival Theatre, Cambridge, needs no programme note to explain that it is an early play. Its technique is for the most part amazingly puerile (and Ibsen was thirty-six when he wrote it), and the translation gave it no help, but concentrated on producing trite clichés. Nevertheless, the conflict between the soul not quite great and incapable of becoming so, and the soul born great and capable of becoming greater, shows very considerable glimpses of Ibsen at his most forceful; and there is a stage bishop (admirably played by Mr. Graveley Edwards) who dominates the first half of the play with the most devastatingly effective remarks. It was interesting to note how the archaic atmosphere disappeared whenever the play grew really interesting, to be replaced by something very like the language of the "drawing-room dramas."

Madame Tussaud's has now arisen, glorified, from its ashes, and was opened to the public last week. It now contains, as well as the waxwork exhibition, a restaurant and a large cinema. The exhibition galleries, which contain most of the old familiar figures and royal groups as well as many additions in the representations of recent and contemporary celebrities, are a great improvement upon the old. The costumes were put in the hands of Mr. Herbert Norris, whose great knowledge of this subject has been put to good use in his designs for the dressing of the historical figures, so that the exhibition provides an excellent *résumé* of the history of fashion. The principal film shown at the opening of the cinema was "The Private Life of Helen of Troy," adapted from the novel by Mr. John Erskine. Its idea is to show the doings of the Iliad from behind the scenes, as it were, reducing the heroic to the personal, and representing the figures of Helen, Menelaos, and Paris as ordinary beings of contemporary American life. The burlesque is often amusing, occasionally witty, and the film is well acted and well photographed: the scene of the wooden horse is particularly well done. Miss Maria Corda, who made a personal appearance at the first performance, takes the part of Helen: Mr. Lewis Stone and Mr. Ricardo Cortez are Menelaos and Paris.

There is no better way of studying the developments of British painting and sculpture during the last fourteen years than to see the Retrospective Exhibition of the London Group at present being held at the New Burlington Galleries, Burlington Gardens. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that every important modern British painter and sculptor either is or has been a member of this group since it first came into existence in 1914. The London Group has never been narrow or limited in its theories; it has aimed always at vitality rather than particularity of manner. Developing out of the "Camden Town Group," which was founded by the late Harold Gilman, Spencer Gore, and Mr. W. Richard Sickert, the London Group represents such different tendencies as Wyndham Lewis, Duncan Grant, Epstein, Dobson, Gaudier Brzeska, Mark Gertler, Frederick Etchells, Roger Fry, Matthew Smith, C. R. W. Nevinson, and John and Paul Nash. The aim of

this "retrospective" exhibition is to show examples of the work of past and present members at all periods, and it is arranged on a chronological plan. It is thus possible to trace not only the development of the individual artists but the tendencies of painting and sculpture as a whole during this period. It is not only an extremely interesting, but an impressive, exhibition.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, May 5th.—

Adila Fachiri and Donald Francis Tovey, Sonata Recital, Wigmore Hall, 8.

Harold Samuel, Bach Recital, Æolian Hall, 8.15.

"The Messiah," at the Crystal Palace, 8.

Sunday, May 6th.—

Mr. C. Delisle Burns on "In France during the Elections," South Place, 11.

Dr. Walter Walsh on "Animals' Welfare Week," Lindsey Hall, 11.

"The Twelve-Pound Look," by Sir James Barrie, at the Adelphi (Sunday Play Society).

R.A.D.A. Players in "A King's Daughter," R.A.D.A. Theatre.

Monday, May 7th.—

Sir Harry Lauder, at the Victoria Palace.

"The Barker," a play of American Circus Life, at the Playhouse.

M. André Maurois on "A Frenchman Looks at England," on the Wireless, 9.15.

Tuesday, May 8th.—

"Our Little Wife," by Mr. Avery Hopwood, at the Comedy.

"Gottterdammerung," at Covent Garden.

"Music and the Ordinary Listener," by Sir Walford Davies, on the Wireless, 9.15.

Wednesday, May 9th.—

"Mud and Treacle," by Mr. Benn W. Levy, at the Globe.

Thursday, May 10th.—

Walter Wilkinson's Puppet Show, Poetry Bookshop, 6.

Mr. Vernon Bartlett on "The Way of the World," a topical weekly survey of events in the world at large, on the Wireless, 9.15.

Friday, May 11th.—

"Das Rheingold," at Covent Garden.

OMICRON.

## A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE ATHENÆUM, MAY 7TH, 1828.

PERIODICAL LITERATURE

BY THE REV. HENRY STEBBING, M.A.

### Conclusion

THE result of the rapid survey we have taken of Periodical Literature and the subjects connected with it, does not present us with so flattering a view of the state of letters in England as might have been looked for. The activity of the public mind, it would seem, has made literature popular; but it has lowered its dignity, and lessened its usefulness. It has made a reading public, but not a thinking people; increased the demand for books, but not the veneration of philosophy; and rendered all classes almost equally eager in the pursuit, by making everything comfortable to popular taste and caprices. Our literature, consequently, wants the noble seriousness which exalts and strengthens the intellect by alluring it to the contemplation of beauty and excellence, and purifies the heart by fixing its sympathies on the objects in which they centre. It wants the spirit which aims at usefulness and good, with a constant and persevering patience, and the strength and boldness which would elevate it into dignity and independence. Having this tendency to weakness and perversion, the highest intellects would be well employed in bringing their richest stores to renew its vigour. The corruption of literature, when once begun, is rapid and entire; and each age becomes progressively shorter after the golden one, till taste and sentiment, art and philosophy, are alike polluted and degraded.

## THEATRES.

<b>ALDWYOH.</b> (Gerrard 2304-5.) Nightly at 8.15. Matinees, Wed. and Fri., at 2.30. "THARK." Mary Brough, Winifred Shotter, and TOM WALLS.	
<b>AMBASSADORS.</b> (Ger. 4460.) EVGS., 8.40. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30. OWEN NARES in "TWO WHITE ARMS." By HAROLD DEARDEN. LEON M. LION'S PRODUCTION.	
<b>COURT</b> (Sloane 5137). "THE TAMING OF THE SHREW." By William Shakespeare. (IN MODERN DRESS.) EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATINEES, THURS. & SAT., at 2.30.	
<b>DRURY LANE.</b> (Ger. 2587.) 8.15 precisely Wed., Sat., 2.30 precisely. "SHOW BOAT." A New Musical Play. EDITH DAY. CEDRIC HARDWICKE. MARIE BURKE. PAUL ROBESON. HOWETT WORSTER. DOROTHY LENA. LESLIE SARONY. VIOLA COMPTON. ALBERTA HUNTER.	
<b>DUKE OF YORK'S.</b> EVENINGS, 8.40. MATS., WED., SAT., 2.30. "THUNDER IN THE AIR." A New Play by ROBINS MILLAR. VIOLET VANBRUGH. J. FISHER WHITE. HILDA BAYLEY.	
<b>FORTUNE THEATRE.</b> Regent 1307. NIGHTLY, at 8.30. MATINEES, THURSDAY AND SATURDAY, at 2.30. "ON APPROVAL." By FREDERICK LONSDALE. ELLIS JEFFREYS. RONALD SQUIRE.	
<b>GAIETY.</b> (Ger. 2780.) EVGS., 8.15. Mats., Wed. and Sat., 2.15. 2nd Year. RUSSELL JANNEY'S Musical Triumph. "THE VAGABOND KING."	
<b>GARRICK.</b> (Ger. 9513.) NIGHTLY, at 8.30. MATS., WED., SAT., 2.30. THE MOSCOW ART THEATRE. In Repertoire. Owing to success, Season extended until May 12th.	
<b>GATE THEATRE STUDIO,</b> 164, Villiers Street. "ORPHEE." By JEAN COCTEAU. NIGHTLY, at 9. Annual Subscription, 5s. 6d. Apply Secretary. Chancery 7263.	
<b>GLOBE</b> WED. NEXT, 8.15, subs. 8.40. 1st MAT., SAT., MAY 12, 2.30. "MUD AND TREACLE." TALLULAH BANKHEAD and NICHOLAS HANNEN.	
<b>HIPPODROME, London.</b> Gerrard 0650. EVENINGS 8.15. MATS., WEDS., THURS. & SATS., at 2.30. "HIT THE DECK." IVY TRESMAND. ALICE MORLEY. SYDNEY HOWARD. STANLEY HOLLOWAY.	
<b>KINGSWAY</b> (Holb. 4032.) Nightly, 8.15. Mats., Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30. JEAN CADELL in "MARIGOLD."	
<b>LYRIC THEATRE,</b> Hammersmith. Riverside 3012. EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30. "LOVE IN A VILLAGE." An 18th century Comic Opera, by Bickerstaffe.	

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<b>PRINCE OF WALES.</b> Gerrard 7482. EVGS., 8.30. WED. & THURS., 2.30. "GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES." By Anita Loos and John Emerson.	
<b>PRINCES.</b> (LAST 2 WEEKS.) "BITS AND PIECES." GEORGE ROBEY. MARIE BLANCHE. EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.	
<b>ROYALTY</b> (Ger. 2690.) EVGS., 8.30. Mats., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30. BARRY JACKSON presents "BIRD IN HAND." A New Comedy by JOHN DRINKWATER.	
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## ART EXHIBITIONS.

<b>THE LONDON GROUP</b> RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION—the Modern Movement. New Burlington Galleries Burlington Gardens, W.1. April 30th—May 26th. 10—6.	
<b>G. B. TIEPOLO.</b> EXHIBITION OF DRAWINGS. SAVILE GALLERY, 7, STRATFORD PLACE, OXFORD STREET, W.1. Daily, 10—6; Saturdays, 10—1. Admission free.	

## OFFER TO NEW READERS

Any reader who makes his first acquaintance with this journal with this week's issue is invited to fill up the attached:

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## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

### THE ANATOMY OF NATIONS

**T**HERE are two kinds of books in which generally I expect to find, and find, 99 per cent. of nonsense to 1 per cent. of sense, the books which generalize about the differences between men and women and the books which generalize about the differences between the people of different nations and races. When Dr. Johnson tells us that all foreigners are fools, I recognize a great truth which throws as much light upon the condition of my mind and the mind of the Doctor as upon that of the Frenchman and German, but when I find a man asserting that the Englishman is this, the German that, and the Frenchman the other, I respectfully close his book and return it to the bookshelf. The thin abstractions which he calls an Englishman, a German, or a Frenchman bear the same relation to reality as the old economic man did to the cotton-spinner who destroyed the machines and became a Chartist. When, however, I saw that Mr. Salvador de Madariaga had written a book called "Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards" (Oxford University Press, and Milford, 12s. 6d.), I hesitated. Mr. de Madariaga is an intelligent man and a good writer, and his birth and the circumstances of his life should have enabled him to know far more about Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Spaniards than most of us. The people who write about nationalities are usually either rather foolish patriots or very patriotic fools, so that it was tempting to see what a really intelligent man had to say on the subject, particularly one who knew for himself that patriotism is not enough. So in the end the lure of Mr. de Madariaga's intelligence led me to read his book.

It is an intelligent book, and Mr. Madariaga's considerable knowledge of Britain, France, and Spain enables him to say many interesting things about their inhabitants. Yet even he does not escape the snares and pitfalls of his subject. The snares are the half-truths and quarter-truths which impudently masquerade as the whole truth; the pitfalls are generalizations about Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Spaniards which, in fact, are only true of some Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Spaniards. Mr. Madariaga's book is based on a theory. He holds that the centre of psychological gravity in the Englishman is the will which leads to action; in the Frenchman the intellect which leads to thought; in the Spaniard the soul which leads to passion. This theory is worked out and applied to the facts in very great detail. The Englishman is shown to be dominated by his instinct for action and for communal co-operation even in the realms of thought or passion. The Frenchman in love is represented as still being an intellectual, and the French vocabulary and the French bureaucracy are both the products of intellect, while passion is responsible for Cervantes, El Greco, the erratic political history of Spain, and the Spaniard's attachment to lotteries.

There is, of course, some real foundation for this theoretical structure to rest upon. In English life—educational, political, social—action plays a large part; voluntary co-operation flourishes; the theorist is mistrusted, and the practical man who just knows where he wants to go and gets there somehow or other is frequently chosen to manage a business, a trade union, or a Government Department; and the national game is cricket. In France the intellect does not hide its light under a bushel or in obscure garrets; every town has a bookshop, and the bookshop really sells books; people sit about in cafés and talk, and no man hesitates to use abstract words, define a term, or propound

a theory; the politician stands upon the rostrum, his forefinger pointing to the ceiling, and pours forth a cascade of words and the beaded bubbles of abstractions, generalizations, theories, and principles; the Government is organized from the Centre with mathematical precision, and bureaucracy sits heavily upon the land. In Spain, Constitutions are made to be ignored, Governments rise, revolutions are made, Empires are lost, but the Spaniard remains indifferent except in brief moments of excitement; he falls passionately in love, cultivates his garden or his vineyard, and rides a mule, while his national sport is the bullfight.

If Mr. de Madariaga had confined himself to tracing the effects and limitations of these tendencies in the national life of the three countries, his book would have been more valuable and more convincing. But his theory that the Englishman is a man of action, the Frenchman a man of thought, and the Spaniard a man of passion is much too simple and sweeping, and his effort to apply it as a universal application leads him often into absurdities. For instance, he ignores the fact that the Frenchwoman normally has nearly all the characteristics of the man of action and is certainly as practical and unhampered by theory as his typical Englishman. Again, it is true that the Government of France is to-day based on *le droit* and a written Constitution, worked out on principles of order, logic, and reason. But if this be the result of innate national psychology, and is the effect of the Frenchman being a man of thought and not a man of action or a man of passion, the fact that the whole system dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century surely requires some investigation and explanation. The political and social system of France before 1789 was just as irrational and hierarchical as the English system, described by Mr. de Madariaga, is to-day. Are we therefore to say that it was only in 1789 that "the Frenchman" became a man of thought? Mr. de Madariaga's generalizations about "the Englishman" rouse the same kinds of doubt and raise the same kinds of question. Superficially, it is true, the communal mould is stamped very heavily and effectively upon the young Englishman. But the "eccentric Englishman" is also a reality, and he is as often eccentric in the world of thought as in the world of action. Berkeley and Newton, Donne and Peacock were as good Englishmen as Lord Palmerston, Lord Cromer, Disraeli, or Mr. Lloyd George. An Englishman, on investigation, often turns out to be a Scotsman, and I deny that the average Scotsman is less a man of intellect than the average Frenchman. Again, Mr. de Madariaga's theory does not enable him to give anything but a lame and halting explanation of the violent eruptions of imagination that Englishmen have always been liable to. The galaxy of English poets requires a good deal of explaining away on Mr. de Madariaga's theory, and really his attempt to explain them as a paradox is altogether too lame to get him over this particular stile. "The inartistic, unpoetic people of England," he says, "have produced the greatest poets in Europe," because "her poets are by definition men of passion, . . . but, as men born of the people of action, endowed with a rich substratum of moral values. And it is obvious that such a combination is the ideal one for the creation of great art." Nor do I understand what Mr. de Madariaga means by saying that poetry is in England "the almost exclusive appanage of the upper classes." The two poets whom he mentions as being the greatest certainly did not belong to the upper classes.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## NEW NOVELS

- Storming Heaven.** By RALPH FOX. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)  
**Octavia.** By MARGOT OXFORD. (Cassell. 7s. 6d.)  
**Claire Ambler.** By BOOTH TARKINGTON. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)  
**Brook Evans.** By SUSAN GLASPELL. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)  
**Shipwreck in Europe.** By JOSEF BARD. (Harper. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Diary of a Communist Schoolboy.** By N. OGNYOV. Translated by A. WERTH. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)  
**Maria Capponi.** By RENÉ SCHICKELE. Translated by HANNAH WALLER. (Knopf. 10s. 6d.)  
**Jazz and Jasper.** By WILLIAM GERHARDI. (Duckworth. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Greene Murder Case.** By S. S. VAN DINE. (Benn. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Footsteps at the Lock.** By RONALD A. KNOX. (Methuen. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Four Tragedies of Memworth.** By LORD ERNEST HAMILTON. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Missing Partners.** By HENRY WADE. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)  
**Mystery at Lynden Sands.** By J. J. CONNINGTON. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Mystery of the Blue Train.** By AGATHA CHRISTIE. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)  
**2 L.O.** By WALTER S. MASTERMAN. (Gollancz. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Red Dwarf.** By MOLLY THYNNE. (Nelson. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Man with the Dark Beard.** By ANNIE HAYNES. (Lane. 7s. 6d.)

I HAVE read from cover to cover all but one of the seventeen books listed above, never skipping more than an occasional paragraph. And I have read twenty pages or so in seven or eight other new novels. Yet I have not succeeded in finding one book which seems to me to need serious discussion as literature. It is horrible to think of the energy that goes into writing, printing, selling, and, dare I add, reviewing, these novels. And they are considerably above the average of what is pouring from the presses during the publishing seasons. If it were possible to read the novels I have glanced into and discarded, the report of the investigation would be a frightening indictment of human folly. All I can now do is to make a few notes on each of these books so that readers with a library list may have some idea which of them are likely to appeal to their taste.

I think that "Storming Heaven" is the best modern picaresque novel that I know. The hero is irresistible, a Sheik for the sophisticated. The child of an Englishman and a Pacific Islander, he escapes from an orphanage to a ship, and after some years with anarchists on the West Coast of America, wanders westwards from Vladivostok, acting plays in the villages, travelling in a caravan from Omsk to Tashkent, and ends, at the age of seventeen, doing five years in a Moscow prison for murder. Mr. Ralph Fox has the advantage evidently of personal knowledge of Asiatic Russia, which seems to me the most romantic country in the world: Kirghiz and Usbeg have the allurements now that Burgundians and Angevins had, in the time of Scott, but Mr. Fox can also communicate his experiences. He is interested in love as well as in politics, in the intricacies of character as well as the ways of wild peoples. His book makes the world more interesting. And though his style is often highly coloured, a certain dryness of mind behind it gives the book great distinction. I recommend "Storming Heaven" to every sort of reader who is not easily shocked.

"I found "Octavia" a dull book. Everyone who has read Lady Oxford's autobiography knows that she can write with great brilliance and point. Her account of her meeting with General Booth is a masterpiece. But in her novel she has chosen to forget the variety of her experiences, and to recapture the atmosphere of the hunting field, in which, I imagine, her happiest days were spent. I am sure it is all very accurate, but to readers who do not hunt, it is not very interesting. Any subject can be absorbing in the hands of a great writer, but Lady Oxford is more interested in her subject than in what she can shape from it. Towards the end she seems to have felt this; and we are given some "sex stuff," which really does not help. The characters fall too easily into remarks like "Life would be a poor affair if you lost sight of the stars." The novel seems the work of a writer who admires unconventionality in unimportant matters, but remains ineradicably conventional in thought.

"Claire Ambler" is an acutely observed study of an American girl: the niece, I surmise, of one of Henry James's young ladies. At seventeen she is barely distinguishable from Miss Anita Loos's heroines, but the unhappiness her beauty brings to men gradually educates her sensibility. Mr. Booth Tarkington writes well.

"Brook Evans" is another American novel. Miss Susan Glaspell does not write well. But behind a splurge of words and a lot of theatrical emotion one does feel a sincere conviction. And her plot is good.

Mr. Josef Bard is a Hungarian it seems, but as no translator's name is given, I presume that he wrote "Shipwreck in Europe" in the language he acquired in the United States. I do not think he is a novelist, but the book is full of interesting comments. It is the story of an American business man who comes to Vienna to be psycho-analyzed, and finds his attitude to life disintegrated by contact with Europe. At the end he returns perceiving that Europe is Europe and America America, and never the twain can meet. There is an agreeable hardness about the author's mind, but the book is unconvincing.

"The Diary of a Communist Schoolboy" is not a document but a satire, and an amusing one. A friend of mine, aged eleven, to whom I lent it said it was just like life at Summerfields. The Russian boys talk about Lenin instead of Jack Hobbs, and call those they don't like "bourgeois" or "intellectuals" instead of "fools" or "hogs."

"Maria Capponi," like most German novels, is too long. It is the story of a love affair which began when the hero was a child and persisted through his life, though he married another woman. It has a violent sort of sunset beauty about it like Thomas Mann's "Tod in Venedig" or Strauss's "Don Juan." In D. H. Lawrence, or perhaps Mr. Edward Sackville West, you find the nearest English equivalent. The book is worth feasting and leaves you affected by a rich vicarious experience.

I fell asleep reading "Jazz and Jasper," and my dream seemed indistinguishable from the novel. For Mr. Gerhardt resembles the *surrealistes*. He seems to throw on to paper every thought or fantasy that wanders into his consciousness. Sometimes the result is amusing. But I found it impossible to follow this paper-chase with invisible paper. Russians, newspaper-peers, and viscountesses appear and disappear, making inconsecutive and improbable remarks, until the atom is disintegrated, and a few of the characters float off into the universe on an Austrian peak that alone survives from the abolished world. I do not think Mr. Gerhardt shows intellectual control or intense imagination enough to write a book of this sort. But how can one approach without prejudice a novel with so nauseating a sub-title as "The Story of Adams and Eva"?

After these novels so ambitious and often so unsuccessful, what a relief to plunge into detective fiction. It is like settling down to Patience when the other members of an ill-assorted and loquacious house-party have gone to bed. But I think it is time that certain new rules were laid down, as it were by the Portland Club, for the playing of this game. The first rule should be that the murderer's motives for the murder should be clear from the start. In too many detective stories, one can detect the guilty party merely by the fact that he (or she) is the only important character in the book who appears to have no motive for the murder. I think a second rule might be made to exclude the use of impersonation or dictaphones on the ground that they are unconvincing. The author of "The Greene Murder Case" keeps these rules: indeed, I think he is my favourite detective writer. "The Benson Murder Case" and "The Canary Murder Case" were both admirable (though the latter broke rule II.), and his new book is flawless. There are seven or eight suspects, any of which might be guilty. And the murderer is one of them, not a detective or other outsider with no revealed interest in the affair. Quite early he gives the clue which points out the guilty party, and I am pleased with myself for having spotted it at the time. I never guessed how the matter was managed, however, until the author revealed it at the end. This is the best detective story I have read this year.

"The Footsteps at the Lock"—it is almost too ingenious. The elaboration of hypothesis suggested by each clue betrays, I think, the author's sound training in theology. Many readers will complain that the book is too intellectual. It is "pure"





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later day. Their doctrinal heresies (such as their rejection of transubstantiation, infant baptism, and the intercession of saints) arose in part from their Gnosticism, for they were a sort of branch of the old Manichæan movement; but it arose partly, too, from the anti-sacerdotalism bred in them by a contemplation of the contemporary priesthood. Their main concern was with conduct; it was the austerity of their lives which gave them their hold over the poor among whom they laboured, and some of their social ideals (certain socialistic tenets and the condemnation of war and capital punishment) seem curiously advanced.

By the close of the twelfth century the Church was almost at the apex of its power. It had triumphed over the Empire, perfected its organization, systematized its theology, and seemed to hold society in the hollow of its hand. Wealth and power were its dominant characteristics, and in these there was no institution in Europe which could equal it. Yet at its heart there still stood the remembered figure of a poor man, who had lain in a manger, wandered with low-born disciples preaching a doctrine of unorganized love in Palestine, and had taken no thought for the morrow. Always between the Church and its Founder there was this contrast; and the ideal of apostolic poverty lay like a handful of dynamite under the foundations of the majestic edifice whose centre was Rome. The early reformers of the eleventh century tried to recover the ideal by means of new monastic orders within the Church, but these could never maintain their pristine poverty for long. So when the twelfth century dawned, with its social and political unrest and its intellectual and spiritual fervour, the hand which set a torch to the dynamite came from the common people themselves.

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idealism of the poor went in large parts of Italy and France. Their followers were of the same flesh and spirit that made the friars, but whereas Innocent III. had the wit to keep the friars within the fold and to use them as preachers, his predecessors had not the wit to keep the Waldensians, who thereby might have been saved from many of the heresies into which they fell. So they were harried and burned in the horrible Albigensian Crusade, and much that was sorely needed by the Church perished with their errors.

Perhaps it was as inevitable that they should be wiped out by persecution as that the orders of friars should rot away from within. Upon the horns of this dilemma those who wished to Christianize the Church were all impaled. If they stayed within it they were institutionalized and grew rich and lost what they had risen to affirm; if they were driven out of it, either persecution destroyed them or they destroyed themselves by falling into strange excesses. For all these heretics sought to cope with doctrine as well as with conduct; their untutored minds, groping with the mysteries of theology, turned towards Gnosticism and their identification of the body and all matter with the principle of evil, led to morbid extremities of asceticism, which must in the long run have broken their hold upon society. Nevertheless, they deserve the pity and respect which humanity keeps for its lost causes. We know of them only through the writings of their enemies; they had their saints, but for them was no glorious communion; their prophets were without honour, save in their own country; the blood of their martyrs was the seed of no Church. The poor folk who followed them were often faithful to death, and their best epitaph is the tribute wrung unwillingly from the lips of one of their persecutors: "Whence do these children of the devil obtain a steadfastness in their heresy, such as is scarcely found in believers in the faith of Christ?"

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Page 44.—"I gathered from the conversation that Jesus was known among the Bedouins and deemed a holy man."

N.B.—Mr. Seabrook is described in Press notices of the book as having been accepted by the Arabs as a Moslem (*vide also p. 47*).

Page 42.—"Among the Bani Sakhr it was the custom for only our sheikh, Mitkhal Pasha, to do the praying, wholesale, as it were, for all his people."

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DR. MACALISTER'S record of the archaeology of Ireland from the earliest times to the close of the mediæval period is presented with so much learning combined with lucidity that no serious fault can be found with it. In parts it is discursive, in others temperamental, and occasionally it is opinionated. But the readers even of archaeological treatises are not absorbent machines: a little colour, a little seasoning, or we perish. Dr. Macalister has, in fact, achieved everything that could be expected of a Professor of Archaeology at Dublin University, and added thereto a lively and human element rare enough among professional experts but among the prehistorians. . . ! Why, then, are we dissatisfied with the book? The answer has nothing to do with the Professor's own handling of his task; it concerns the dead-end condition of the science whose boundary marks he has necessarily to observe. Modern archaeology has developed the *expertise* of describing tombs, implements, bones, and other survivals of the remote past, of judging their evolution and of subdividing the periods to which they belong to the nicest efficiency. In so doing it has incurred the nemesis of all over-specialization: it has lost sight of the landscape in the plot of ground, and this narrowing process has made it impervious to the reception of new ideas, suspicious and resentful of any rereading of the past which conflicts with traditional canons, and aggressively doctrinaire. In just the same way, the Iguanodon or the Diplodocus and others of the Saurian best people lived their lordship of creation without reference to the lowly but nimble little mammals who finally wrested their sovereignty from them.

Let us illustrate what we mean from the pages of Dr. Macalister's book. In his exposition of Irish prehistory, as full, balanced, and conscientious as we have the right to expect it to be from such an authority, he omits any but the briefest reference to archaic Oriental culture on the one hand and Celtic mythology and folklore on the other. No blame again to the Professor. It does not do for professors to be heretics. But the consequence of this lack of correlation is simply the loss of illumination. We know everything there is to be known about Irish remains at the end of the book, but we have formed no mental picture of what ancient Ireland was like. Dr. Macalister might well retort—in fact, he hints something to that effect—that his business is with archaeology alone. That does not save us from being constantly left *in vacuo*. Examples occur on an average about once in every half a dozen pages. The author tells us that the Age of Stone overlapped the Age of Metals and that the "Neolithic" people who introduced agriculture, spinning and weaving, and other arts and crafts of civilization were probably lured into Ireland by the richness of its gold supply. There we stop short—we tremble on the edge of momentous significations which only a study of advanced cultures in their Near Eastern homes can reveal. We are told that some Irish uncarved menhirs represent the figures of gods. Why and by what evolution? There is no way of knowing except by understanding the relations of stone-working and deity in the ancient East. "Reburials after the decay of the flesh" are described to us. They have no meaning unless such examples are correlated with other similar processes in the Far East which are certainly degenerate forms of mummification, and with such Gaelic legends as the talking head of Bran and tales of the reanimation of the dead. We are given copious details of the figure of the labyrinth carved on the famous Hollywood Stone, which is identical with the labyrinth of Daedalus stamped on Cretan coins; we are once more apprised of the resemblances between the tumulus of New Grange and the Mycenaean tholoi-tombs; we learn that the figures on the Clonfinloch Stone are cognate with "Neolithic" wall-paintings in Spain, and that the curved portico of a sepulchral monument at Armagh is homologous in structure with those of the "Giants' Graves" in Sardinia. There we leave it. But these things mean something; they are leading clues to the reconstruction of the past, and so again and again we are conscious of an enticing country of research

which is only just round the corner, a country which may contain the richest unexploited mines of historical truth. But archaeology, having become an exclusive, viz., a sacred science, will have none of it—and we go on reading about how the flange developed in the bronze axe-head. At times this Wordsworthian dogma of keeping the eye rigidly on the object leads to positively misleading results. Dr. Macalister tells us that Pictish society was "cognate" with that of Bronze Age Ireland, because it was governed by an exogamous matriarchate. But early civilization was matriarchal in all of its chief centres. On the score of chronology alone, quite apart from far wider issues, archaeological provincialism sadly needs overhauling and aerating, and the relations between archaic East and West scrutinized by unprejudiced minds. When it comes to the chronology of the Stone and Bronze Ages, Dr. Macalister, confined within the archaeological carapace, can tell us no more than that the Bronze Age in Ireland is divisible into five periods corresponding with five different types of implement. We sigh in vain for the larger correlations.

We are forced to the conclusion that until the overlying strata of the prolific Irish folklore are duly disintegrated and cleared of their rubble; until the trackways leading from East to West are properly trodden and explored, and until mythology, folklore, history, and archaeology can meet in council, we are not going to understand either ancient Ireland or indeed any other country of prehistory. And until we understand their cultural processes we shall have no true perspective of our own civilization.

## POETRY

**Collected Poems.** By EDWARD THOMAS. With a Foreword by WALTER DE LA MARE. (Ingpen & Grant. 6s.)

THE reader will greet a new collected edition of Edward Thomas's poems gladly, partly because it proves a certain demand for his works; and also with a touch of pathos which never quite reaches to the plane of tragedy. Thomas had worked his best years in hack-writing; he had found poetry late, writing it with almost glib happiness; and soon afterwards was killed in the war. "It is little less than tragic," Mr. De la Mare writes in the preface, "to think how comparatively unheeded in any public sense was his coming and going."

Yet that is natural. Thomas was one of the shy or hermit poets, desiring always to write their *own* poetry—a personal incantation first, a communication second. If at all a conscientious public cares for such a man, it is nearly always with an admixture of kindness which more resilient writers—Meredith, for instance—would resent. For they are children at heart, these men of the green fields, looking to Nature for solitary comfort; they are not adult, taking the central blows of life gravely and poetically. Too rarely does Thomas have this kind of strength; in his war poems only, perhaps. Therefore, despite his charm, despite his fluency, he cannot be the major poet his friends vaunt him to be.

He is before all else English, "English as this gate, these flowers, this mire," one with "Clare and Cobbett, Morland and Crome." The very place-names of England glow with new magic in his verse. Like all true lovers of the country, he likes her undramatic, quiet, a shade wistful. He nets an ordinary moment—say, an old man remarking "the latter-math will be a fine one"—justifying it alone with the glamour of recollection and of his silvery verse. Any quest of the extraordinary is not towards greater emotion, but towards quaintnesses, odd speech, country survivals. Generally he is seeking peace in a peaceful landscape—the landscape mattering a little too much—in a rather stock spring. The comfort gained is not always wished for himself, it is true, but for "soldiers and poor, unable to rejoice." Too much refined solitude, however, is sickening:—

"I built myself a house of glass:  
It took me years to make it:  
And I was proud. But now, alas!  
Would God someone would break it."

Then the war awakened him. "This is no case of Petty Right or Wrong" has a different vigour, and his most



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beautiful work was done at this period; for example, the poem beginning:—

"Rise up, rise up,  
And, as the trumpet blowing,  
Chases the dreams of men. . . ."

and

"Out in the dark over the snow  
The fallow fawns invisible go,"

and "Lights Out," with its incomparable first line:—

"I have come to the borders of sleep."

It is unlikely that these will be forgotten.

### NAPOLÉON'S FAMILY

**Napoleon and His Family: the Story of a Corsican Clan.** By WALTER GEER. (Allen & Unwin, 18s.)

EVEN casual students of Napoleon know that his family played an important part in his career. But this painstaking volume will bring home more vividly to most readers the actual extent to which his foes were those of his own household. Mr. Geer has not attempted a new "Life" of Napoleon, whose public actions are recalled and examined only in so far as they were determined by, or themselves influenced, his private affairs. Mr. Geer has thoroughly mastered his subject, and he gives us what is probably the fullest single account yet presented of the various members of the Bonaparte family. His book is not only scholarly, but, for the most part, very readable. It reminds us, in some respects, of one of those leisurely, old-fashioned novels in which groups of the many characters disappear and reappear at intervals. It is true that the interest flags somewhat towards the end. Mr. Geer's concluding chapters—again like those of an old-fashioned novel—taper off into a lifeless chronicle of facts. But his book is, on the whole, not only important but delightful. Napoleon emerges dramatically from it—almost a Job in the trials that beset him, and often meeting them with Job-like fortitude.

Napoleon's patience, however, cannot wholly be counted unto him for righteousness. Even when most troubled by public affairs, he never lost sight of the interests of his family, and he said that he lived only to give them pleasure. Yet this, though shot through with streaks of genuine magnanimity, was far from being pure altruism. For, as it is Mr. Geer's main purpose to emphasize, Napoleon's loyalty to the clan was one of the chief legacies of his Corsican ancestry, and it was upon the Corsican idea of the clan, though amplified, that he founded his conception of the Grand-Empire. Nor could bitter experience teach him to revise that conception. The higher Napoleon rose, and the more generously he lavished position, honours, and money upon his mother, his brothers and sisters, and his wife, the more rapacious and exacting became their demands. Mere greed, though this was unappeasable, was the least of their faults. There were endless deceptions and intrigues, and perpetual rivalries and squabbles about the succession. And, added to everything else was base ingratitude. It was solely through Napoleon's efforts that his family was raised from obscurity and comparative poverty. But there was not one of the band that did not sincerely believe that success was due to his or her own personal merits. Those who hold that it is a mistake to do too much for one's friends will find ample support for their theory from the life of Napoleon!

Yet Napoleon tenaciously maintained his faith in the clan. Despite the struggles with his brothers, and all the checks and disillusionments that he received, he continued to believe that the family bond was the only one that was serious and durable. "He still held that no political alliance was stable unless fortified by a family alliance. He was convinced that family sentiment, only, could lead individuals to forgo their personal ambitions and co-operate loyally, under the direction of the chief of the family." Mr. Geer, though he only carries on the story to the year 1809, shows clearly enough that in this false political conception lay the seeds of the tragedy that came to fruition in St. Helena. There is something distinctly likable about Napoleon the man as he appears in these pages. But his brother Joseph, for all his avarice and subterfuge, reveals broader and saner ideas of statecraft.

### ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

THERE is again a long list of interesting biographies. First, an old one: "The Life of Charles Dickens," by John Forster (Palmer, two guineas), is republished with notes and an introduction by J. W. T. Ley. "Fouché," by Nils Forssell, translated by Anna Barwell (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.), ought to be a fascinating book. Another important historical biography is "Maximilian and Charlotte of Mexico," by Egon Count Corti, translated by C. Alison Phillips, 2 vols. (Knopf, 25s. each). Of different calibre are: "Charles Baudelaire," by François Porché (Wishart, 10s. 6d.); "Hyndman, Prophet of Socialism," by F. J. Gould (Allen & Unwin, 10s. 6d.); "On the Stage," an autobiography by George Arliss (Murray, 16s.); "The Windsor Beauties," by Lewis Melville (Hutchinson, 21s.), which gives an account of some ladies of Charles II.'s Court.

Ambroise Vollard's "Degas," translated by R. T. Weaver (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.), will attract all who know the same author's admirable biographical sketch of Cézanne. M. Vollard pursues in this book the same method of reporting conversations. The book is illustrated with reproductions of some of Degas's pictures. Other art books are "English Domestic Architecture of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," new and revised edition, by H. Field and M. Bunney (Bell, 18s.); "Old English Porcelain," by W. B. Honey (Bell, 21s.); "Forty Years of Landscape Architecture, Vol. II., Central Park," by F. L. Olmsted (Putnam, £1 11s. 6d.).

The Fanfrolico Press publish a reprint of "The Parliament of Praters," of John Eliot, 1593 (15s.).

"Falsehood in War-Time," by Arthur Ponsonby (Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d.), is a collection of the lies circulated in the various nations during the Great War.

Messrs. Werner Laurie publish a translation of Zola's "L'Assommoir," by Mr. Arthur Symons, in a privately printed edition limited to one thousand copies, signed by the translator (25s.).

### BOOKS IN BRIEF

**Behind the Brass Plate.** By DR. A. T. SCHOFIELD. (Sampson Low, 15s.)

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**Auction Bridge.** By TAYLOR and HERVEY. (Putnam, 5s.)

This book is not for the most expert, but for the average player who wishes to improve his game up to the point of soundness. For such it can be warmly recommended. It is extremely clear, so that there is no excuse for the most muddle-headed to misunderstand. It also leads the learner onward step by step.

**A Select Bibliography of the Principal Modern Presses, Public and Private, in Great Britain and Ireland.** By G. S. TOMKINSON. (First edition Club, £2 2s.)

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## PUBLIC NOTICES, LECTURES, ETC.

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A LECTURE on "FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC OPINION—A PLEA FOR SECRET DIPLOMACY" will be given by DR. ELIE HALEVY (Professeur à l'Ecole des Sciences Politiques, Paris), at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2), on THURSDAY, May 17th, at 5 p.m. The Chair will be taken by Prof. Graham Wallas, M.A., D.Litt. (Emeritus Professor of Political Science in the University).

A Course of Three Lectures, with Lantern Illustrations, on "ROMAN BRITAIN AND RECENT EXCAVATIONS," will be given by MR. R. G. COLLINGWOOD, M.A., F.S.A., at KING'S COLLEGE (STRAND, W.C.2), on FRIDAYS, MAY 18th, 25th, and JUNE 1st, at 5.30 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by the Right Hon. The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, K.T., F.R.S.

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A COURSE of Three Lectures on "HENRIK IBSEN" will be given (in English) by PROFESSOR HALVDAN KOHT (Professor of History in the University of Oslo), at UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON (Gower Street, W.C.1), on MAY 10th, 15th, and 17th, at 5.30 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by Prof. J. G. Robertson, Litt.D., Ph.D., M.A. (Professor of German in the University).

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Wednesday, May 9. "George Eliot's Novels."  
Thursday, May 10. "Mrs. Gaskell and her Characteristics."  
Friday, May 11. "George Eliot and her Characteristics."

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THE SCHOLA VITAE, 29, Norfolk Square, Hyde Park.

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Friday, May 11th, 8.15 p.m., "Discontent and the Proceeds of Industry." Speaker: W. McG. Eager, Sec., Liberal Party's Industrial Enquiry.

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ing and book production. Mr. Tomkinson deals with over eighty modern Presses. For those included in Part I. of his book he gives practically complete bibliographies, while for those included in Part II. selected bibliographies are given. The chief distinction is apparently that the products of the one class are "collectable," while those of the second are not. Publishing concerns are included, provided that they call themselves "Presses," and are not purely commercial. There are in fact Presses included which do not print, and others again whose activities it would be difficult to distinguish from those of the more enlightened "commercial" publisher. Nevertheless, the book is really valuable, because it includes the pioneers of good printing in Britain to-day, and because to Mr. Tomkinson himself it has obviously been a "labour of love."

**The Europa Year-Book, 1928.** Edited by MICHAEL FARBMAN. RAMSAY MUIR, and HUGH F. SPENDER. (Europa Publishing Co., and Routledge. 21s.)

This is the third issue of an extremely useful annual, containing a survey of economic and social conditions, a directory of the League of Nations and of international societies, and a European Who's Who in politics, trade, science, art, and literature, in which there are 18,000 biographies and over 10,000 verified addresses of institutions and individuals all over Europe. The Year-Book is now firmly established, and is a mine of information, unobtainable in any other English publication, which any student of international politics urgently needs.

## REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES

THIS month yields a rich harvest of magazines, including two new ones. Or rather, the first of these, the "Eugenics Review," is not exactly new, having reached Volume XX., but the Eugenics Society is anxious to extend its scope beyond the bounds of actual members. The present number contains an interesting article by C. J. Bond on "Causes of Racial Decay." There is also: "England To-day—and Yesterday," by M. C. Buer, and articles on "Temperament and Social Class," "The Biology of Superiority," and "The Cost of a Child." The paper is well printed and costs only three shillings.

The other new arrival is the "Shakespeare Review," a monthly magazine devoted to Literature and the Drama and published at Stratford. "Our first concern will be to do whatever lies in our power to combat the demoralizing futility of our times," writes the Editor, Mr. A. K. Chesterton, in his leading article. "Seldom has there been a period so sterile in thought, so lacking in idealism, &c." We seem to have heard this before, and then, "We wish to herald the fame of the world's master-singer in such a manner that the purveyors of pornographic filth will fly before the vanguard of a renaissance which will redeem the sacrifice of a million brave Englishmen on the fields of France." All very well meant, but the Shakespeare that emerges is the official Shakespeare of the Stratford celebrations—the Shakespeare who is so brilliantly described and his creators so scarified this month in the always brilliant and mordant "Mask."

The "Slavonic Review" is, as usual, full of most interesting things. On the political side there is, "How I was Hoodwinked by the Bolsheviks," by Basil Shulgin, who told us the first news of his adventure in previous numbers; the story grows "curiouser and curiouser," and is hardly to be understood by a British mind. Then Paul Milyukov writes on "A New Slavonic Policy," and there is the third part of "The Mission of Liman von Sanders," by Robert J. Kerner. On the literary side we have: "The Dramatic Art of Ostrovsky," by Ira Beasley, and translations of poems by Pushkin and Lermontov, and stories translated from the Serbian and Albanian languages.

"History," the journal of the Historical Association—April is a month prodigal in Quarterlies—has "Some Aspects of English Finance in the Fourteenth Century," by Anthony Steel, and a criticism of "The Board of Education Report on the Teaching of History in London," by J. A. White. The "Scottish Historical Review" has an interesting article on "Angus: Kingdom, Earldom, and Shrievalty," by Helena Carnegie.

"The Antiquaries' Journal," rather severely specialized, this, has a "Report on the Excavations at Stonehenge during

1925 and 1926," by Lieutenant-Colonel W. Hawley, F.S.A. The "British Museum Quarterly" publishes some fine reproductions of recent acquisitions which would be still more valuable if they were accompanied by a scale. It is true that the scholarly descriptions of the objects always include the dimensions, but a scale would still be a comfortable thing to have. The most interesting acquisition of this quarter is a bronze figure of a Portuguese soldier which comes from Benin and is the work of a sixteenth-century native artist.

The "Journal of Philosophical Studies" has "Morality as an Art," by S. Alexander; "Instinct and Moral Life," by Louis Arnaud Reid, and "The Ethics of Communism," by John Laird.

The "Edinburgh Review" has "British Influence in South America," by W. A. Hirst; "Peace in the Pacific," by F. W. Eggleston, and "The American Naval Programme," unsigned. And with that we arrive at the political monthlies.

The "Socialist Review" publishes "The Liberal Report: A Reply to John Wheatley," by Hubert Phillips. In the same paper Dr. Norman Leys writes on "The Problem of Empire: What to do with the Dependencies." "During the first month it is in office the first British Socialist Government ought to appoint one or more Royal Commissions. . . . The business of the Socialist Royal Commission . . . would be to report how to excise from the laws of the dependencies all distinctions due to race or colour, and how most rapidly and effectively to transfer to the majorities in those countries the authority that so criminally has been, and at this very moment is being surrendered to the homologues of the eighteenth-century slave-owners."

There are two articles on Russian matters in the "Nineteenth Century": "The Soviet and Disarmament at Geneva," by F. G. Stone, and "The Stalin Dictatorship," by Francis McCullagh. There is also an article on Stalin in the "Contemporary Review," by M. A. Aldanov. Wickham Steed has "The Fascist Challenge to Freedom" in the same paper, and Lord Olivier writes on "The Boycott of the Simon Commission." In the "Fortnightly" Bertrand Russell discusses "The New Philosophy of America":—

"To my mind," he writes, "the best work that has been done anywhere in philosophy and psychology during the present century has been done in America. Its merit is due not so much to the individual ability of the men concerned as to their freedom from certain hampering traditions which the European man of learning inherits from the Middle Ages. Perhaps these traditions can be summed up in the one word contemplation. . . . A modern European professor . . . continues to believe in contemplation. In him this belief takes the form of admiration for pure learning, regardless of its practical applications. . . . It is psychologically connected with an attitude of reverence toward the universe which is hardly compatible with belief in man's omnipotence through the machine. We do not contemplate the flea, we catch it. The modern point of view is in its infancy, but we may foresee a time when it will lead men to regard the non-human world with as little reverence as we now feel toward the poor flea."

The "Empire Review" has an article, "Concerning Conrad and his Work," by Sir Hugh Clifford. The "World To-day" has "Goethe," by Emil Ludwig, and "Etruscan Places," by D. H. Lawrence. The "Cornhill Magazine" has, as usual, a good selection of stories and an article on "An Experiment in Poor Law Administration," by Edith Sellers.

## Books for your Library

You can obtain any books reviewed or advertised in this or any other paper, or those mentioned in the Lists of the National Book Council, through any Bookshop or Railway Station Bookstall of W. H. Smith & Son. The Book Council Lists can be inspected at any of "Smith's" 280 Bookshops.

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## COMPANY MEETING.

## ODHAMS PRESS LTD.

## SUCCESSFUL YEAR.

The Meeting of Odhams Press, Ltd., was held on Tuesday last at the Hotel Cecil, Strand, W.C. Mr. W. J. B. Odhams, the Chairman of the company, who presided, said that the profit carried to Balance-Sheet was £151,753, comparing with a profit of £116,872 for 1926 and with £118,114 for 1925. They had to-day what was probably the most complete plant in the Kingdom for the output of printing work of all descriptions. The average output of newspapers and periodicals produced by the company was not less than four million copies per week—over 200 millions per annum, apart from their general printing business.

The net paid sales of "John Bull" had increased during the year under review by over 100,000 copies per week, and were now over 1,200,000 copies weekly.

The rules of evidence for the Law Courts had been wisely framed for the carrying out of justice between contending parties, but, as the law stood, a third party had no power to reply while an action was proceeding. He was sure it was unnecessary to assure the shareholders that there was no power on earth which could influence one line of "John Bull."

Under the heading of "Investments" was included 80 per cent. of the share capital in the Company owning "The People" Newspaper. That Sunday journal had now attained a net paid sale of 1½ million copies per week, and, when the heavy expenditure incurred in building up the paper had been dealt with, substantial dividends would accrue to the Company.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

## COMPANY MEETING.

## FRIENDS' PROVIDENT AND CENTURY LIFE OFFICE

The Annual General Meeting of the Friends' Provident and Century Life Office was held on May 2nd at the Holborn Restaurant, London.

Mr. Harold J. Morland (the chairman), who presided, said: Turning to our report and accounts for the year 1927, if for the purpose of measuring our progress we combine the new business of this office and the Century, we find that the net new life assurances amounted to £1,548,236, and the sinking fund assurances to £405,805, making together £1,954,041, which is considerably in excess of the combined new business of any previous year. The profit from favourable mortality was about £60,000, a highly satisfactory sum. The net rate of interest earned on the funds after deduction of income-tax was again in excess of 5 per cent.

## CENTURY ACCOUNTS

The premium income of the fire, accident and general, and marine departments was £603,482, an increase of £11,693, and, after provision of full reserves for all known liabilities, trading profits of £31,448 were transferred to profit and loss account.

The total funds of the Friends' Provident advanced during 1927 by £359,700, and amounted at the end of the year to £5,534,534.

## DEVELOPMENT OF SUBSIDIARIES

The Century, in common with nearly all other composite companies, controls a number of subsidiary companies, themselves carrying on a considerable business. If the accounts had been prepared in an amalgamated form they would have shown that the total profit accruing to the Friends' Provident in respect of the investment in Century shares for 1927 was £131,174, which is equal to 18½ per cent. free of tax. Of this sum, £83,574, equal to nearly 12 per cent. free of tax, on the investment in Century shares, was added to reserves.

## ACCEPTANCE OF DEPOSITS

This office, in the endeavour fully to carry out the assured's aspirations, is therefore willing to accept, either for a fixed term of years or for the life of a specified person, the deposit of moneys arising from policies maturing either at death or by survivorship, at a rate of interest only ½ per cent. less than the rate earned by the office's funds as stated in the annual report from year to year. For the year 1928, therefore, on the funds invested in this way the rate of interest payable will be £5 9s. 10d. per cent., that is, 10s. per cent. less than the average earnings of £5 19s. 10d. stated in the report for 1927.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

## COMPANY MEETING.

## THE EAGLE STAR AND BRITISH DOMINIONS INSURANCE CO., LTD.

## SATISFACTORY YEAR'S OPERATIONS.

Presiding at the General Meeting of the Eagle Star and British Dominions Insurance Co., Ltd., held on Tuesday, May 1st, Sir Edward Mountain, Bart., J.P. (Chairman), in moving the adoption of the Report and Accounts, said that the Report showed substantial progress in all sections.

*Departmental Accounts.*—The Life Department had showed very pleasing results. New Policies numbering 2,142 were issued for sums assured of £1,653,180 gross.

The Premiums in the Fire Department, less reinsurances, amounted to £1,098,436, showing a slight increase over last year, whilst net claims paid and outstanding amounted to only £542,220, a considerable decrease. After providing for a reserve of 40 per cent. of the premium income, the profit for the year amounted to £80,174, which, with the balance brought forward, made a total of £93,265. They had decided to take advantage of such a favourable year to create a Special Reserve Fund of £25,000 over and above the usual 40 per cent., thus creating a buffer between their ordinary Fire Reserve and the Special Reserves in the Balance-Sheet.

The Accident, Employers' Liability, and General Insurance Departments showed satisfactory results for the year.

In regard to the Marine Insurance Department, as they were aware, the year 1927 worked out unsatisfactorily for most companies. In their own case they deemed it advisable to strengthen the Fund by the transfer of £75,000 from Profit and Loss, thus bringing the Fund up to £557,544.

*Profit and Loss Account.*—The Profit and Loss Account, after writing off the cost of the acquisition of the Allied Traders' Insurance Co., Ltd., amounting to £6,745, showed a balance of £89,642, which, after providing for dividends, left £47,879 to be carried forward, an increase of £5,870 on last year. The premium income for the year amounted to £4,467,865, being an increase of £358,899 over 1926, while their assets now totalled £21,152,224, an increase during the year of £277,107.

In conclusion, he wished to state that their prospects for the coming year appeared favourable, and the results of the valuations of their Star and Sceptre Funds, which were due to take place at the end of 1928, should be of considerable interest to the Shareholders.

The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted, and the proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Directors, and Staff.



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### INSURANCE NOTES

#### BUYING A HOUSE SAFELY

IN an article on "Wise and Unwise Spending" in a recent issue of the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE JOURNAL, the writer refers to instalment buying, and says: "The system is sound where it is utilized for the acquisition of an asset of more or less permanent value, such as a dwelling house, the ownership of which may enable an individual to save more of his income than would otherwise be possible."

A house is purchased on the instalment plan when the transaction is effected with the assistance of a Building Society. The advance made by the Building Society is repayable by instalments which are so arranged that at the end of the period selected, usually twelve or fifteen years, the mortgage is repaid and the house becomes the property of the borrower, *if he lives so long*.

Since the War the Building Societies have played an important part in the process of reconstruction, by enabling many thousands of persons to purchase suitable houses. The total membership of Building Societies in Great Britain in the year 1918 was about 625,000, and the amount advanced on mortgage during that year was nearly £7,000,000. According to the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies' Report for 1926 (the latest available), these figures had risen to 1,129,455 members and nearly £50,000,000 advanced on mortgage in the year 1925. In the seven years 1919-1925 inclusive, the total sum advanced on mortgage was over £205,000,000. The Building Societies Year Book, 1927, quotes the total assets of all Societies in Great Britain as being £169,000,000. One other point from the Year Book: "The increase in the assets of the Post Office Savings Bank during the ten years from 1916 to 1926, was 47 per cent.; the increase in Trustee Savings Banks' assets in those ten years was 51 per cent.; the increase in Building Societies' assets was 159 per cent."

These Societies are thus a powerful economic force in the country, and their activities deserve wider notice than they have so far received.

#### A DISADVANTAGE

The Building Society scheme has one disadvantage. If the borrower dies, any outstanding balance of his debt must be repaid, either in one sum, or by a continuance of the customary instalments until the end of the agreed period. This must involve much hardship on a family which, deprived of the breadwinner, finds that it has to live on a severely reduced income. Fortunately this unpleasant experience can be eliminated by a properly devised scheme of life assurance to cover the balance of the debt at any point of time during the repayment period. Many combined schemes of Building Society loans and life assurance have been launched in recent years. As the additional expense involved is comparatively slight, none but the foolish and thoughtless purchaser will neglect this obvious precaution, in the interest of his family.

#### THE ALLIANCE POLICY

We have made this reference to the Building Society movement and the need for life assurance to be coupled with an instalment scheme of house purchase, because we have just received from the Alliance Assurance Company, Ltd., a leaflet which deals with a special type of life policy, which can be so combined with a Building Society loan, as to make the two transactions virtually only one. The plan applies to persons who are "about to take" advantage of the facilities offered by a Building Society, so that presumably it cannot be adopted by existing borrowers. The "Alliance" policy provides that in the event of the death of the borrower during the term of mortgage, the whole balance of the mortgage money outstanding at the date of death, including interest that has accrued since the last preceding payment date, will be paid to the Building Society.

A policy of this kind is issued at a Single Premium, and it is stated by the "Alliance" that the Building Society will add the amount of the single premium to their loan upon the house, and slightly increase the amount of the normal periodical payments. Intending house purchasers should study the "Alliance" scheme.

Bona-fide readers of THE NATION may address their Insurance queries to our Insurance contributor. Address all communications: "Insurance," THE NATION, 38, Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C.1.



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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## SINKING FUND—NEW ZEALAND LOAN—INDUSTRIAL SHARES—TWO BANKS

THE gilt-edged market is at present elated by the listing of 5 per cent. War Loan as well as of 4 per cent. Funding Loan on the New York Stock Exchange. New York dealings are of more immediate importance than Mr. Churchill's provisions for debt redemption in 1929-30. But the gilt-edged market will some day—perhaps the day when it is feeling depressed—wake up to the fact that Mr. Churchill has not really made proper provision for the accruing interest on Savings Certificates in the next two or three years. It has been pointed out that if the interest charge for Savings Certificates exceeds £16½ millions in 1929-30 and all other interest charges exceed £288½ (total £305 million) there will not be enough even for a £50 million Sinking Fund. If the statutory Sinking Funds attached to specific loans were not covered, the gilt-edged market would receive an unpleasant shock. But what the Editor of THE NATION fairly describes as the "Sinking Fund Wangle," the City is inclined to regard as the "Sinking Fund Gamble." Mr. Churchill is gambling upon a substantial reduction in debt interest charges. This means that he is gambling either upon a fall in money rates or upon a rise in Government credit, that is, upon the conversion of large blocks of debt into debt bearing a lower rate of interest.

Mr. Churchill claimed in his Budget Speech that the conditions for future conversion operations had greatly improved. We have already argued that the listing of the 4 per cent. Funding loan in New York should tend to raise the prices of all British Government securities and should make the way easier for the Treasury in its future conversion operations. A significant move has been made this week by the issue of a New Zealand 4½ per cent. loan at 94½—£5,000,000 for cash and £5,000,000 for conversion. The payment of a full six months' interest on November 1st gives a "turn" of about ½ per cent., but even at 94 the flat yield is only £4 15s. 9d. The loan will attract the super-tax payers because allowing for repayment at par in 1947 the redemption yield is nearly 5 per cent.—in other words 4s. 3d. per cent. is free of tax being capital appreciation. This is the first time since the "pre-war" period that a Dominion Government has floated a loan on practically a 4½ per cent. credit basis. New Zealand is a popular borrower, and her credit stands high—her 5 per cent. loan being quoted at 102 net. But if New Zealand can get away with £5,000,000 cash on a 4½ per cent. basis, Mr. Churchill may argue that he can convert a goodly portion of the 5 per cent. War Loan on a 4½ per cent. basis. He may even be toying with the idea of a dollar loan in New York. In these circumstances we repeat the warning we gave in THE NATION of April 21st, that 5 per cent. War Loan holders should now reconsider their position in the light of a gilt-edged market under the influence of New York.

The Industrial share market remains extremely bullish. That is not surprising in view of Mr. Churchill's determination to relieve the prosperous industries as well as the depressed from the burden of rates. There have been some extraordinary rises. In the gramophone market the 10s. shares of Columbia Graphophone have soared to £14½. This is clearly the influence of New York. American investors have no means of sharing in the prosperity of the American subsidiary of Columbia Graphophone except by buying the shares of the British parent which are now listed in New York. When these shares fell to 7 1-16 in February we wrote (*vide* THE NATION of February 4th)

that at such times the speculative investor should buy as many of these shares as he could pay for. We hope he did. The 10s. shares of Duophone Unbreakable Record, a new Company manufacturing cheap records, have also had a remarkable spurt. We referred to these shares as an interesting speculation in THE NATION of February 4th when they were 30s. They have risen to £4 on the expectation that the Company will absorb British Brunswick and will give a bonus to shareholders on the flotation of a new company to handle the foreign rights. An extremely unintelligent "bear raid" has helped the rise in these shares. But leaving speculation aside, there are still sound investments left in the industrial share market, even at present prices. On the assumption that there will be no war in the next few years, and that British and international trade will continue gradually to improve, we have selected some industrial shares which we think can still be bought with a view to capital appreciation:—

	Price.	Dividend.	Yield.
British Match	34/6	int. 2%	—
Dunlop (6s. 8d.)	31/9	25%	5.25%
Imperial Chemical (£1)	*37/6½	8%	4.41%
Courtaulds (£1)	4½	15% free†	4.28% gross
Imperial Tobacco (£1)	108/3	25% free	5.77% gross
Associated Portland Cement (£1)	28/0	8%	5.71%

\* Imperial Chemical are cum dividend of 8 per cent.

† It will be observed that we have allowed in the case of Courtaulds for a dividend of 15 per cent. Strictly we should have allowed for half of last year's dividend of 25 per cent. being paid on the doubled capital, but even the most conservative expect the distribution for the current year to be not less than 15 per cent. free of tax. Although the flat yield is lower than that which can be obtained on first class industrial debentures, yet we should be surprised if an investment in these ordinary shares over a period of years did not prove much more remunerative—allowing for capital appreciation—than an investment of a like amount of capital in fixed interest securities.

English banks do not return a yield to the investor of much more than 5 per cent. The investor might therefore consider the attractions of yield afforded by the shares of Bank of Australasia and Skandinaviska Kreditaktiebolaget. The issued capital of Bank of Australasia has just been increased from £4,000,000 to £4,500,000 by the issue to shareholders of 100,000 new shares of £5 at a premium of £6. The new shares are quoted at £14 5s. and interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum is payable on them up to October 15th after which the old and new rank equally. For the last two years this Bank has paid 14 per cent. free and earned 16.3 per cent. on its capital. If the same rate of dividend is paid on the increased capital, which can be reasonably expected, the new shares return a yield of over 6 per cent. gross. Bank of Australasia is one of the strongest of the Australian banks. Since 1918 the balances left over after payment of dividends have aggregated nearly £1,000,000. At October 10th, 1927, reserves amounted to £3,850,000, or 96½ per cent. of the then issued capital of £4,000,000. Bank premises are valued in the balance-sheet at only £129,792. We believe that a conservative valuation of this item is between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000. Skandinaviska Kreditaktiebolaget is the oldest and one of the most important banks in Sweden. Its shares are of the par value of 142 Kroner, and the present market price is 310 Kr. ex the 1928 dividend of 15 Kr. At this price the shares return a yield of 6.87 per cent. The dividend rate of 15 Kr. per share, or 10½ per cent. has been maintained since 1922. Thirty thousand shares of this bank are held by Krueger & Toll. Through the Kreuger interests, the Bank has been closely connected with the developments of the Swedish Match and Grangesberg Iron Ore companies.



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